The Moral Conflict of Humanity

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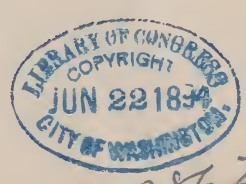
THE MORAL CONFLICT OF HUMANITY

AND OTHER PAPERS

BY

A. C. KENDRICK, D. D., LL. D.



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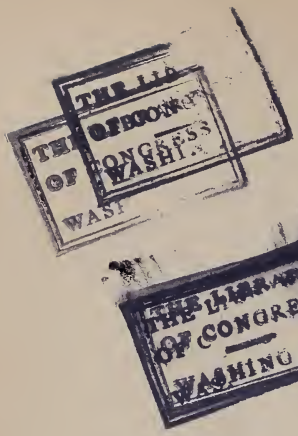

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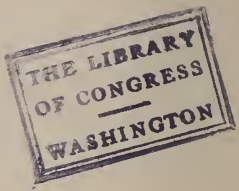

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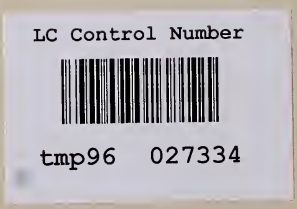

CONTENTS.

I.

THE MORAL CONFLICT OF HUMANITY, ... 7

II.

RENOVATION OF PHYSICAL NATURE AT THE RESURRECTION, ... 47

III.

THE PAROUSIA AND ITS ATTENDANT EVENTS, . . 63

IV.

THE EXALTED NAME, ... 80

V.

THE MILLENNIUM OF THE APOCALYPSE. 84

VI.

THE RENDERING OF "ΓΡΑΦΉ," 105

VII.

THE SELF-EVIDENCING CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE, . 109

VIII.

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MESSAGE TO CHRIST, . . 125

IX.

Jesus and the Jewish Temple, ... 135

X.

Three Parables, ... 145

XI.

The Father of Lies, ... 170

XII.

The Heathen and the Light of Nature, . . 176

XIII.

Sin and Death in Adam and the Race, . . . 182

XIV.

Accursed From Christ, ... 211

XV.

Baptism for the Dead, ... 220

XVI.

Preaching to the Spirits in Prison, ... 253

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

THE papers comprising this volume, with one or two exceptions, have been previously published in various periodicals. Their superior merit caused those becoming acquainted with them to wish for their rescue from their more or less precarious existence, and their embodiment in a permanent form worthy of them and of their distinguished author. After the rewriting of some, and the careful revision of all, they were furnished for this volume.

Few of our eminent educators have the opportunity for publication which their positions and influence would warrant. Their duties are too exacting. Routine work is too despotic, and the class room absorbs what the larger public might enjoy. It affords the publishers especial pleasure that in the present instance they carry to that wider circle some fruitage of the life of one as conscientious in the service of his students as he was helpful to them.

Dr. Kendrick does not need and would deprecate any praise from us. It is but simple justice however to say, that his command of English is equal to his knowledge of Greek, and that allied to both, is a poetic Christian imagi-

nation not often excelled. These qualities all appear in these papers, and will cause them to receive a warm welcome from those to whom for years the name of Dr. Kendrick has been almost a household word.

As might be expected from a man of Dr. Kendrick's scholarship he has assumed an independent position as to the truths expounded. It so happens that because of this, in the exegesis of some disputed passages he stands directly opposed to the commonly received interpretation, and at some points in disagreement with the views of many in the denomination to which he belongs. In these he expresses his own thought, and the publishers are not in every instance to be regarded as agreeing therewith. The sincere, earnest purpose of the truth-loving Christian student is manifest on every page, and the characteristic just indicated will enhance rather than diminish the value of his work. Thought will be stimulated where assent may be denied. It is felt that the book is at once a deserved tribute to a Christian scholar, and an important contribution to the body of Christian thought.

THE MORAL CONFLICT OF HUMANITY.

I.

THE MORAL CONFLICT OF HUMANITY.

(*ὁ γὰρ νόμος πνευματικός, ἐγὼ δὲ σαρκινός.*)

Romans 7 : 7-25.

THERE is, in the deepest import of the term, but one single conflict of which our earth is the theatre; a conflict out of which all others spring, and into which they all may be resolved. It is the struggle between moral good and evil, between right and wrong, between holiness and sin. It is this which imparts to every collision of political or social elements, to every form of outward or inward warfare, whatever of vitality and significance it possesses. If it does not contain the element of right and wrong, if it does not rest at bottom on some moral antagonism, it is scarcely worth the paper and ink consumed in making its record. There is no irreconcilable and internecine hostility; no irrepressible and interminable conflict; no war which admits absolutely no terms of adjustment, except the war between opposing moral elements as they are more dimly discriminated by man's natural reason, and as brought out into broader and sterner antagonism on the luminous page of revelation.

This conflict is partially outward. It bodies itself forth in the great social and political forces which affect human pro-

gress. It is the latent power in all the great movements which convulse and upheave society. Yet these are but secondary and symptomatic. They are but occasional excursions of the contending parties from that which is their proper theatre and battle-ground—the human soul. The powers properly and primarily arrayed in the strife are the sentiments and affections, the principles and passions of the individual man. Here, in the secret chamber of a single soul, hidden away from the light of the sun, rages a conflict deeper in its origin, mightier in its elements, broader in its compass, and more momentous in its issues than any outward war that convulses thrones and shakes continents. In the terrible strife there going on, myriads of spirits hasten to marshal themselves as combatants and allies; the clang of its unearthly weapons rings through all the realm of the Invisible; its vicissitudes are watched by millions of eager gazers in the high places of the creation; and its issues involve the weal or woe of a being molded in the image of God and born to the high heritage of his eternity. This contest is the substance of which all others are but shadows. This is the one grand central struggle of which all others are but border skirmishes, and by which, sooner or later, they all will infallibly be determined. How goes the battle in the human heart? Tell us that, and we will spare you the trouble of forecasting the issues of the outward struggles of society. They are predetermined. The results of all minor controversies are wrapped up in that of the one all-comprehending contest. When the citadel has fallen, it is hopeless to defend the outposts. When the heart has withered, any external bloom must be transitory. When the fountain is cut off, the streams must cease to flow. And so the currents of social improvement must neces-

sarily dry up unless fed from vital and perennial springs of virtue in the individual soul.

A conflict such and so momentous is actually going on in every human bosom; it has been the inevitable allotment of humanity from the hour of the apostasy. And, what is unutterably sad, it is a conflict in which, apart from the special provisions of redemption, the better cause is invariably the loser. Wherever this universal battle has been fought, under whatever diversity of outward circumstance, whether amid the dense darkness of uncultured heathenism, amid the mocking lights of refinement and philosophy, or under the broad, clear, steady illumination of God's revealed law, however varied in form and intensity, everywhere and always the heart that has not been the subject of a divine renewal and had its weakness re-enforced by Almighty strength, has succumbed beneath the terrible might of the forces of evil. One long succession of defeats, utter and ignominious, fills out the monotonous and dreary record of the strife of unaided humanity with its gigantic moral foe. It has struggled: God has never allowed a human being to walk the earth so degraded but that some ray of moral light flashed across the darkness of his soul, and some faint sentiment of virtue resisted the inrushing powers of evil. But the struggle was predestined to failure. Speculatively, metaphysically, the human will may be as free as the most ardent champions of free volition assert; but religiously, spiritually, it is the victim of a bondage of which Egyptian or African servitude is but the faintest symbol.

This great conflict in its fiercest phases, and in its inevitable and melancholy defeat is, we believe, delineated by the Apostle Paul in the latter part of the seventh chapter of his Epistle

to the Romans. The natural antagonism between the lower and higher elements in man, between the flesh and the reason, the depraved passions and the conscience—an antagonism heightened and intensified by the presence and powerful action of God's revealed law—is here drawn out in few but dark and decisive lines, such as he only could have employed who knew by experience all the horrors of the conflict. We say such we believe to be the nature of the delineation ; for, as our readers well know, the passage has been the subject of two very diverse interpretations, the one ordinarily regarded as the Calvinistic, the other as the Pelagian. The former refers it to the so-called Christian warfare, to the struggle between gracious and depraved affections in the renewed man; the latter to the strife in the natural man between the heart and the reason under the stimulating influence of God's revealed law. The latter view prevailed among the Christian fathers until the time of Augustine. They understood the passage nearly unanimously of the conflict which takes place in the unregenerate soul under the convicting influences of the law. For dogmatic reasons, Augustine, in his controversy with Pelagius, took a different view, and referred it to the strife of contending elements in the converted soul. Otherwise, some of its expressions seemed hardly consistent with his doctrine of the complete original depravity of fallen man. His interpretation was followed by the leading expositors of the Reformation. Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, each so explained it. And, in fact, since the time of Augustine, the two opposite interpretations have been deemed the indexes of two diametrically opposite theological systems. To deny that the passage describes the " Christian warfare " has been considered almost tantamount to a denial of that warfare itself, or at all events

as marking a strong tendency to the lower and looser tenets of Pelagius. The other view has been deemed almost indissolubly associated with the profounder theology of Augustine and Calvin. We believe the time to be not distant when such a judgment will be a matter of astonishment; when it will be seen that the passage, as interpreted by most of the Fathers, instead of deserving the brand of the *odium theologicum*, as the natural ally of heresy, is in fact one of the most thoroughly Calvinistic passages in the whole New Testament, and asserts with extraordinary fullness and decision that bondage of the human will, that complete vitiation and enthrallment of our nature, which is the decisive point of Calvinism.

The drift of recent interpretation is setting toward the earlier view. Bengel, Rückert, Meyer, De Wette, Olshausen, among the late New Testament expositors, have returned to the views of Chrysostom and Theodoret. Umbreit and Delitzsch still indeed adhere to the Augustinian interpretation; while some, as Hoffman, Tholuck, Ewald, compromising the two views, regard the apostle as speaking indeed of his present condition, but of that condition as independent of its Christian elements, making thus a logical and ideal, but not temporal distinction. This latter view has unquestionably a measure of truth. In just so far as the conflict in the renewed is the same as that in the unrenewed man; in just so far as the elements of the moral struggle belong to every stage of yet unsanctified humanity we may admit the correctness of this middle and compromising view. But, after all, this takes it out from the category of the properly so-called Christian warfare. For it is seen at a glance that a class of exercises which is common to regenerate and unregenerate, is not applicable, distinctively, to either. And the real stress of the

controversy is, whether any of the moral movements described in this passage are properly and peculiarly *Christian.* If they are, then Augustine is right, and we have the Christian warfare. If they are not, then the opposite view is right, and we have primarily and properly a war among the natural elements of the soul, even though that war be carried forward into our regenerated state. The proper question, therefore, is whether the passage delineates the strife between the natural and the spiritual elements in the regenerated soul, or that conflict between the flesh and the moral reason—between our depraved lusts and consciences re-enforced by the sanctions, more or less dimly seen, of the divine law, which is the inevitable allotment of our apostate, but recoverable nature. We render our own unqualified adhesion to the latter view.

That we may come intelligently to the subject, we glance rapidly over the preceding discussion. The earlier chapters of the Epistle have shown the necessity of salvation by grace, in consequence of the universal enthrallment of mankind by sin, and their utter inability, therefore, to keep the law. And as the provisions of the gospel are necessary, so in chapter fifth they are shown to be abundant. The remedy is fully adequate to the disease. The streams which flow from the fountains of redemption are deeper, fuller, mightier than those which well up from the dark fountains of the apostasy. The ruin wrought by the first Adam, only paves the way for the grander deliverance achieved by the Second, and the very ravages and desolations of sin are made to render honor to superabounding grace. But this suggests the objection which was early urged against the gospel: Is it licentious in its tendency? If sin is overruled to the glory of abounding grace, shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? And this leads to

the second great feature of the gospel, its spiritual efficacy. It not only justifies, but sanctifies; not only delivers from the penalty of sin, but breaks its internal yoke and power. Its very nature, its fundamental conception, is death to sin and life to holiness. The believer has been freed from bondage, to a law which, as he could not keep it, had power only to enslave and to curse, and been brought into a spiritual state in which he can fulfill essentially the righteousness of the law. So far then, from the gospel being the minister of sin, it alone brings the moral freedom and power through which holy action becomes possible. "For when we were in the flesh," says the apostle, "the motions of sins—the sinful passions—which were through the law, wrought in our members to produce fruit unto death."

But as the apostle had before to vindicate the gospel, he has now to vindicate the law. As he had repelled the inference that, because the gospel makes grace to superabound in the very midst of sin, therefore we should continue in sin that grace may abound, so now he repels the inference that, because the law has been forced into an unwilling instrumentality in producing sinful passions, therefore the law is itself sinful. This is the point which he now proceeds briefly, but earnestly to discuss, viz., the relative agency of sin and the law in effecting the moral ruin of man; that, on the one hand, he may fully vindicate the character of the law, and yet, on the other, show its impotence to wrestle with the gigantic forces of evil in the human bosom. In doing this, he naturally partially personifies sin as well as the law, and this partial, undesigned personification, especially of sin, is kept up mainly through the subsequent description. Sin appears as the primary and malignant agent, the Law as the subordinate

and enforced accomplice, while the "*I*" is the person on whom these forces operate, not the apostle, except so far as the apostle, having gone through the bitter experience, may make himself the representative of all who have shared the like struggle. And it is no part of Paul's purpose to exonerate the individual by throwing the guilt over upon an abstraction called sin. This is not at all in his mind. He is dealing with entirely another matter. He is adjusting the mutual relations of sin and the law, and then depicting the complete and hopeless bondage to which they reduce their victims. Everything else, with his characteristic absorption in the topic in hand, is for the time being lost sight of.

In repelling then, the charge that the law, though accidentally concerned in working human depravity, is itself sinful, the apostle declares at the outset that it is in fact the very antipodes of sin. "Nay, I did not know sin, except through law; for I knew unlawful desire only as the law said, thou shalt not covet." The very fact of the law's *revealing* sin, of its bringing it to light in its true nature as sin, shows that it can have no affinity with sin. We learn sweet by contrast with bitter, and bitter by contrast with sweet. The light that reveals darkness, must itself be the opposite of darkness. The rule which shows the crookedness of an object, cannot itself be crooked. And so the law, against whose solemn background of spiritual requirement sin discloses its nature and enormity, can be no natural parent and ally of sin. Rather it is sin's innocent instrument; "for," proceeds the apostle, "sin taking occasion through the commandment, wrought in me all unlawful desire"; a manifest explanatory expansion of the above terse and emphatic language, "the sinful passions which were through the law." We have here the

rationale of the matter. It was not through the primary agency of the law; it was only as the law was made by Sin the instrument of his malignant and destructive purpose. Sin took advantage of the presence of the law to accomplish that which he otherwise could not do; "for without law, sin is dead"—not *was* dead, but a universal truth, a broad and general statement of the relation of sin to law. Where there is no law, there is no transgression. Sin is not reckoned when there is no law. The strength of sin is the law. The law is its vitality, its stronghold, the very right hand of its power; that of which sin availed itself to come into existence, and under whose shelter and sanction it sways its iron tyranny over the soul. Such is, in brief, Paul's conception of the purpose and action of the law. Its office is to reveal sin, to stir up and bring to light the evil elements of our nature; nay, actually to *create* sin by rendering that sinful which would not be so except as the violation of some positive enactment. Holy action, then, under the law, was impossible, and was even rendered by the law more utterly and absolutely impossible. The law worketh wrath. It has, in the apostle's conception, no reforming power or purpose. It is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; not by corrective and elevating discipline; not by lifting us to a higher plane of moral virtue, from which we could easily step off upon the still loftier platform of the gospel; but by probing to the very bottom; nay, by aggravating; nay, by almost creating our spiritual disease. "It was added on account of transgressions," to give them their direst and most desperate character, and by giving full scope to the ravages of sin, to show us the awful nature of the monster, and to drive, not draw us to the gospel.

And, as without law sin is dead, so by consequence, *I*, the man, was alive once without law. When sin was dead, had as yet no real existence, *I*, in whom through the law it came afterward to live and reign, was alive. Death had not then been wrought in me by that sin which is the parent of death.

I was really in a state of innocence, and consequently of life. Sin, which kills, and therefore, death, its child, had as yet no dominion over me. The meaning of the passage is too plain to allow mistake. It is the direct inference from the preceding. I was alive, not merely in my own imagination, but in the real fact of the case. As there was yet no law which sin could lay hold of to work in me guilt and death, I *must* be innocent and morally living. But when the commandment came, sin came to life, and I died. Sin, working through the commandment, became a living power in my soul and plunged me into guilt and moral death. And so "the commandment which was ordained for life, was found to me unto death." For sin taking occasion through the commandment deceived, beguiled, seduced me, as the Serpent did Eve through the command regarding the tree of knowledge, and slew me, made me the victim of death, as in the case of our first parents. The fault lies not then with the law. It is holy, just, and good. It lies with sin, which wrought death in me through that which is good, that it might be shown to be sin, might disclose the hellish malignity of its nature; might in fine, through the commandment become "exceeding sinful."

We have thus reached the threshold of the disputed passage, and if our interpretation thus far is correct, it will go far to determine our understanding of what follows. We have been tracing the respective agencies of sin and law in

compassing the moral ruin in man, in dragging him down from a state of innocence and life into a state of depravity and death. The delineation is not, as understood by many, that of a salutary awakening from the sleep of death to incipient spiritual life, but rather of the subjection of the soul to corruption and death. The whole drift of the passage is in this direction. It is introduced to indicate the agency of the law in working those sinful passions which, when we were in the flesh, produced fruit unto death. What more natural than that in doing this the writer should go back and trace the respective agencies of the two powers in originating the sinful state? And how apt an illustration was furnished in that law of Eden, which seized upon by sin as an occasion of transgression, became the innocent source of all our guilt and woe! And the *process* is that of sin working death in us through that which is good, and one whose responsibility is sedulously charged upon sin. Had it been a process of moral conviction, of awaking from death instead of plunging into death, why strip the law of that which would really have been its honor? And why commit the monstrous absurdity of making the hellish monster, Sin, turn around and become the leader in the work of moral renovation? If Satan cast out Satan, how can his kingdom stand?

Nor need we have difficulty with the interpretation on the score of fact. It is an ideal description of the process of man's spiritual enslavement and ruin. The allusion is clearly to the scenes enacted in paradise. The prohibition against eating of the tree of knowledge gave opportunity for unlawful desire, which Sin malignantly laid hold of. Previously our first parents *lived*, enjoyed innocence and complete exemption from death. But taking advantage of the command, Sin

wrought in them all unlawful desire; deceived and killed them. The imagery thus drawn from the fall is ideally transferred to the whole agency of sin and the law in effecting man's spiritual ruin. It matters not whether the actual condition has been completely realized in an individual case or not; whether Paul shadows forth a period in his own moral history, as infancy or childhood, in which as yet the law had not come to him, or any condition of humanity, in which the law being dimly revealed, a less flagrant criminality is a sort of comparative innocence. He is illustrating a *principle*—a principle which was fully exemplified in Eden, and is everywhere exemplified just in proportion as the law remains in actual abeyance, and God winks "at the times of this ignorance." Originally sin, through the commandment, plunged the parents of the race from perfect innocence into guilt and death, and the process is repeated in kind wherever the law coming to individuals or communities that had lived in previous ignorance of it, deepens their responsibility and aggravates their condemnation. We need not for a moment suppose that Paul intends to represent the apostasy of our first parents as actually and fully repeated in any of their descendants; or that he regards any human being since the fall as ever really in a state of innocence and life. But the principle is equally exemplified in the absolute apostasy of the first transgressors, and the comparative deterioration which sin works through the law in any of their offspring. Nay, it *might* even be applied to the process of legal conviction, so far as the law then comes with greater power to the soul, and as the clear *perception* of the state of moral death is momentarily confounded with its actual existence. It is no violent metaphor to regard that which awakens me personally and consciously to my

state of perdition as identical with that which really plunges me into it. Still that illusion could be but transient, and that illusion cannot be the basis of the present representation. The death is too real, and the purpose is too manifest to shift its responsibility over from the law upon sin.

Having gone back thus a step to depict the origin of the state, having shown how sin and law combined to plunge the soul from life and innocence into misery and death—"sin working death by that which is good"—he reverts to the consequences of that plunge; and the abiding state of the soul, enthralled under the joint sway of the tyrant, and his unwilling but potent ally is the theme, if we mistake not, of the portraiture which follows. We have first the sudden plunge; we have now the permanent degradation. We are called to follow the awful struggle of a soul that has not forgotten its high origin and destination; that has "not lost all its original brightness"; that still retains a spark of the divine fire which was lighted in the inner sanctuary of its being, in its terrible bondage to the forces of sin and death guaranteed in their usurpation by the strange alliance of the law.

The first wail from the prison-house gives the keynote to all that follows. It tells us at once how complete is the enthrallment, how hopeless will be the struggle. Its terrible import ought never to have been mistaken. In three brief clauses the apostle unfolds the whole secret of his ideal condition. Passing, in the excitement of discourse, from the past to the present, or rather throwing himself back into the past, and giving to his picture dramatic fervidness, he exclaims: "For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, having been sold under sin." Here is the secret of the law's enslaving power over me; the reason why sin can use it in riveting

my chains. It is spiritual and demands, as a condition of obedience, a spiritual nature. But that nature I do not possess. I am carnal; not merely *fleshly* (σαρκικός) but *made of fleshy* (σαρκινός) the expression being entirely equivalent to "being in the flesh" (as if *made of flesh*) of ver. 5, and marking a state wholly incompatible with spiritual action. Let the reader look at the above verse, for it contains the germ of the whole subsequent description; and let him look, in confirmation, at verses 8, 11, and 13. But more, I am "sold under sin," enthralled by a tyrant who, as shown by all the context, rules despotically in my flesh, and thence extends his sway over my entire being. The phrase marks, by universal admission, in this passage the condition of a slave. Hence, the description goes on, as a slave "that which I work I know not." The slave knoweth not what his master doeth, and as he but works out blindly the behests of his master, so he knows but partially the nature and compass of his own actions. Acting against his higher nature, driven by the wild impulses of passion, rather than guided by the steady light of reason, he acts blindly, at random, in the dark. We take γινώσκω with Chrysostom and Theodoret, Rückert, Meyer, Alford, and others, in its simpler sense of know, rather than in that of *allow, approve.* The difference, however, does not affect the general scope of the interpretation.

And in thus working ignorantly and blindly at the imperious and arbitrary bidding of another, "I practise not what I would, but what I hate that I do." I perform at the behests of my tyrant, loathsome deeds, from which my better nature recoils. "The man who acts in the light of his moral consciousness," says Meyer, "does of course not what is abhorrent to his moral reason, but acts in conformity with its dictates.

He who acts without this clear moral consciousness performs not that which his enlightened reason wills, but that which it repudiates and abhors." Is not then the declaration true in a most important sense of unregenerate man? Does he not often violently, and always really, always at least until sealed over to perdition, resist the passions that enslave and debase him? Does he not, in the profounder elements of his soul, loathe the lusts to which he yet feels himself a helpless prey? Is there not between the higher and the lower forces of his nature a war as ruthless as the grave? Is not the literature of the world, is not the experience of humanity written all over with the proofs of the rebellion of subject-reason against the tyrant lust? We need not fill our pages with classical citations to illustrate this point. The whole daily experience of mankind but reiterates the sentiment of the Latin poet:

> Aliudque cupido,
> Mens aliud suadet; video meliora proboque
> Deteriora sequor.

And of the English poet:[1]

> Weak and irresolute is man;
> The purpose of to-day,
> Woven with pains into his plan,
> To-morrow rends away.
>
> The bow well bent and smart the spring,
> Vice seems already slain;
> But passion rudely snaps the string,
> And it revives again.

"And if I do that which I would not, I assent unto the law that it is good." The dissent of my moral reason from my acts is an approval of that law which joins my reason in con-

[1] Cowper, "Human Frailty."

demning them. I thus, in the very act of rebellion, not merely concede, but give my vote of approval to the law which condemns me. The apostle keeps in mind his purpose of vindicating the law for its enforced agency in enslaving the victim; the victim himself pronounces its decisive acquittal. And thus, as the case stands (*νυνί*), acting against my better reason, working that which I would not and which I know not, I show that I am completely in a state of bondage; that I am tyrannized over by a power from without that has absorbed, as it were, my whole being; that "it is no longer I that do it, but Sin that dwelleth in me." Sin has usurped the throne of my being; he compels me to act blindly, darkly, in violation of reason and conscience, and of that moral law to which they lend their sanction. Thus, we have again, if possible, with deeper emphasis, the "sold under sin" of verse 14, in neither case, be it remembered, to exonerate the sinner from responsibility; but here, as throughout, to exhibit the completeness of his bondage under the law, and the "exceeding sinfulness" of sin.

"For I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is, in my flesh, any good"; suggested by the preceding "sin that dwelleth in me," and confirming the statement there incidentally made that sin, and not anything good, dwells in that "flesh" which is my controlling element. I am predominantly "in the flesh," am fleshly (*σαρκινός*), and in this now controlling element of my being dwells no good. The antithesis to the flesh, my moral will, my reason (*νοῦς*), has indeed an element of good, but it is powerless against the overmastering influence of the flesh, which causes every good resolution to perish in the bud. "For to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good, I find not." I have the

power of resolving, of willing, of purposing, but that is all. My resolutions die in their cradle; they are strangled in their very birth by the serpent that has coiled himself around my moral being. And again, in proof he adds: "For the good which I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do"; my moral being is so completely disorganized that its laws are totally reversed. And on this follows an emphatic reiteration of the inference that so acting and so rebelling, I prove myself the bond-slave of sin; my acts are not so much my own as of the tyrant that dictates and compels them. It is not necessary to restrict the "I" here to my internal nature, my better self. It is simply a strong rhetorical figure, asserting the supreme dominion of sin over the the whole man.

The struggle approaches its climax. I have tried the strength of the several parties enlisted in it. Sin, flesh, law, reason, conscience, will, each has put forth its power, and I have reached my conclusion: "I find then the law, the fixed and inexorable fact, that when I would do good, *evil is present with me.*" It matters not how earnest and energetic my striving; what clearness of moral perception, what loftiness of moral purpose, what persistent and desperate endeavor, backed up by the sanctions of the law, come to my rescue. All is in vain. My purpose withers away, and I sink in exhaustion and despair. "I have pleasure, indeed, in the law as to the inward man"; my reason and conscience recognize its majesty, its purity, its transcendent excellence, and render it their admiring homage. But alas for the tyranny of lust! "I see another law in my members (my flesh) warring against the law of my mind, and rendering me captive to the law of sin which is in my members." This is but the summing up of

all that precedes—the final decision as to the strength of the bondage, and the hopelessness of the struggle. My mind, reason (νοῦς), approves the law which lust renders me impotent to obey. Well may such a state of things wring from the wretched bondman the despairing cry, "Miserable man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Who shall ransom me from this triple slavery of sin, flesh, and death?

We are now prepared for the apostle's remedy. We have reached a point which demands the interposition of a divine Deliverer. If ever there was a *dignus vindice nodus*, if ever a crisis which might justly call a deity to the rescue, it is here. In that sharp cry went up the concentrated wail of our apostate humanity—the shriek of a storm-tossed, wrecked, and despairing soul. And where is the remedy? Where the light that shall shine on this deeper than Egyptian darkness? Where the star that shall arise on this stormy ocean, and guide into the port of peace a foundering bark freighted with the riches of immortality? The Deliverer is not wanting. From a high spiritual eminence, the apostle has surveyed these terrible convulsions of an enthralled soul. He has not delineated this scene of gloom and degradation simply to mock us. He has not made his severe and searching diagnosis of our disease without knowing that the physician was at hand. He has not uncovered our moral nakedness, except to reclothe us in vestments of heavenly beauty. He knew from the first whither he was tending. His own soul had gone through the agony. His own lips had drunk to its dregs the bitter cup. His own feet had trod this dark valley and shadow of death, and he knew how glorious a light shines on the realm beyond. He opens to us the abyss of our

wretchedness, that he may point us to a corresponding height of bliss. He portrays the abjectness of our slavery, that he may set over against it the dignity of our spiritual freedom.

"I thank God"—such is the outburst of his apostolic heart as he hangs shudderingly over that gulf of perdition—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" This name suggests the whole. Atonement, justification, redemption, freedom, moral power and purity, spiritual life culminating in life eternal, are all wrapped up in that one all-potent name. It is the talismanic word which transform a scene, black with the pall of death, into a scene radiant with heavenly glory; which bids the slave start into freedom, the sick into health, the dead into life. We stop not to inquire into the structure of the elliptical sentence. Whether Paul renders his thanks to God through Jesus Christ—that there is a Deliverer; or, whether, as we rather believe, he thanks God that deliverance comes through Jesus Christ, matters not as to the essential import of the passage. It is the end of that terrible strife; the soul's emerging from that tempestuous sea into a haven of divine peace and calm.

But having thus briefly and rapturously indicated the remedy, the apostle, before proceeding forward on that swelling flood of triumph, which heaves like a magnificent ocean through the entire next chapter, reverts for one moment to the previous picture, as, however, against the new background supplied by the last sentence. Before, he was alone in his struggle; now he has found a potent ally. Before, it was "I, of or by myself," (αὐτὸς ἐγώ) by a usage of pleonasm, very familiar in Greek. "So then,"—he casts his eye back for a moment—"I, of myself, serve with the mind indeed the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin"; leaving the reader

to draw the contrast, of which, in fact, the whole next chapter is an expansion, that now no longer left to himself, the dominion of the flesh broken, he serves with mind and spirit the law of God.

We have gone rapidly over the passage, and can scarcely be left in doubt as to the nature of the struggle which it delineates. That it is not a Christian who is thus terribly and hopelessly enslaved, is shown first by the origin and starting point of the discussion. It originates in a purpose to vindicate the incidental complicity of the law with sin, in making it produce fruit unto death in the depraved soul; and in doing so, it shows first how sin took occasion from the law to plunge the person into a state of death, and then how the two concur, the one directly, the other indirectly, to hold him there.

And as the starting point, so the whole tone and tenor of the portraiture determine it to the unregenerate. The person is predominately, ideally, theoretically, in the flesh. He is the bond-slave of sin that enthralls his will to his fleshly appetites, makes him powerless to execute the law, and compels him, after treading and retreading the ever-recurring circle of renewed and baffled endeavor, of momentary victory and permanent defeat, to sink at last in exhaustion and despair. Such assuredly is not Paul's ideal of the Christian character, such is not its practical exemplification in the world. The Christian is not the purchased slave of sin; he is not so in the flesh as to be unable to accomplish the spiritual requirements of the law. He does, though imperfectly, yet really perform them. He does not consume all his energies in task work which his better nature loathes. He is not so the thrall of sin that sin, engrossing his personality, becomes as it were the

responsible author of his acts—"No more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Dogmatic ingenuity has indeed tortured the very fact which marks the extreme of degradation into a proof of Christian character. The fact that he is in bondage, that his will is enthralled, argues, it is urged, that it is not the sinner; for to *him* sin is the natural state, and he has no other will. But is it true that there are no conflicting elements in the natural man? Are not reason and conscience inextinguishable advocates for the right, and protestants against wrong, in the human soul? Is it not, therefore, the precise description of unrenewed humanity that it is a subject at once of moral struggle and moral servitude; that the nobler elements which God, as a gracious token, has left living within it, bear decisive though ineffectual testimony against the passions and appetites by which they are enthralled? Is not the higher nature in reluctant vassalage to the lower? These quenchless aspirations after the only good and fair, these longings for a higher life, these life-long endeavors to build up over the treacherous quicksands of passion a durable structure of virtuous character, these remonstrances of the reason, these stings of conscience, these agonies of remorse, these resolutions and repentings, these "resolves and re-resolves," which lie strewn along every step of the pathway to perdition —what are they but eloquent witnesses to the veracity of the apostle? What do they speak of but a perpetual revolt against a perpetually overmastering despotism?

But, on the other hand, *is* this the ideal—or the actual—condition of the believer? He may, indeed, as he renounces his spiritual prerogatives, as he is unfaithful to the law of his heavenly birth, partially pass again under the yoke of sin; but he never becomes again its helpless thrall. He may not

be, and he is not, with his utmost fidelity, able immediately to extinguish his fleshly lusts; but he is on the whole gradually subjugating them, and advancing toward their complete extirpation. In the agonies of the passing conflict, and under the pressure of remaining corruption he may often adopt the language of utter spiritual impotence. He may speak of his thralldom to sin as of a will without any power for good; but the declaration is only partially and relatively true. His normal condition is precisely the reverse. As a Christian, he is free. As a Christian, he is spiritual. As a Christian, walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit, he does fulfill essentially the righteousness of the law. True, he bears into every act the contamination of sin; but it is no less true that he bears into every act an element of holiness. If he never does a deed which does not partially violate the law, he neither, if he is a genuine child of the Spirit, ever does a deed which does not partially, in its deepest significance, fulfill it. And to apply to him who is thus emancipated the terms which express the extreme of moral degradation, is simply monstrous. Who is more wretched than the slave of sin? What condition more abject and deplorable than that of the helpless bondman who, blindly and perforce, works the will of the tyrant who is urging him on to destruction? Such is the state of him whom the apostle here personates. Moral servitude is his ideal condition. It is not the intermittent but the continuous state; not the transient seeming, but the permanent reality. As a slave, he knows not what he works, and prosecutes task work which he hates. As a slave, he has no independent, at least no effective volition, but has his very personality absorbed into that of his indwelling tyrant. As a slave, though he is alive to the excellence of the divine law, and would fain obey

it, yet another law overmasters him, and renders obedience utterly impossible. And finally, as a slave, he raises the agonizing cry for deliverance. To the practical side of the picture there is no relieving light, no softening shade. The condition is absolute. There is not the slightest evidence that the writer speaks only comparatively, and is putting in strong hyperbolical terms the subjective feeling of inability to come up to the measure of the mind's aspirations. The whole tenor of the representation absolutely forbids this idea. It is one dead level, one dreary desert of moral inability. Over and over again is presented the one single feature of the soul's absolute incapacity to break the yoke of sin, and perform—not merely in degree, but in kind--the requirements of the law. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the distinctive, the *differentiating* element of the condition here described is that of one whose moral faculties recognize fully the excellence of the law, but whose enslavement to flesh and sin deprives him of the power to obey it.

In this respect then, how far from decisive is the fact that the believer, in the vicissitudes of his Christian warfare, often finds these expressions applicable to his own experience. That may be very appropriate as a passionate hyperbole which is very far from true as an objective description. The Christian is still, though not in the sense in which the apostle often uses the expression, in the flesh. Sin, though vanquished, has not been exterminated. The gospel does not at once consummate its redeeming work, but leaves him still to many a bitter struggle, and sometimes to succumb for a moment to his powerful foe. Hence in the varying phases of his Christian life, the expressions of the present passage often force themselves from his lips. To his present seeming they are not in-

applicable. Looking at what he should be and what he is—at his ideal and his actual self—at the heights of transcendent purity which he is yet so far, far below—he often *feels* that to will is present with him, but that performance is impossible, and he often sighs despairingly over the bondage of the flesh. But after all, his state is removed as wide as the poles asunder from the one here described. That is relative, this is absolute; that is exceptional, this is normal; that expresses the transient phases of Christian feeling; this the sad and final verdict of the moral consciousness. The one struggler is really spiritual with contaminations of the flesh; really free, but with dark reminders of his slavery; really going on in a career of moral conquest, and "through the shadows of the globe sweeping into the younger day." The other, really in the flesh, really in bondage, alternates only between desperate struggle and inevitable defeat.

We see, then, how widely the passage differs from others which are sometimes appealed to as proof that the picture here drawn is applicable to the Christian. In 1 Cor. 3, the apostle tells his Corinthian brethren that he could not speak unto them as spiritual, but as carnal, as babes in Christ. "And ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is jealousy and strife among you, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The state here represented is exceptional and partial, the result partly of spiritual infancy, partly of a voluntary descent from high Christian ground into the turbid atmosphere of human passion. Christians are nowhere treated as mere spiritual machines, but as moral agents, capable of relapsing, partially at least, from their spiritual standing and yielding to the seductions of the flesh. Forgetting his heavenly birthright and his spiritual freedom, the believer may partially re-en-

thrall himself to the sins from which he has been emancipated. In his folly he may, and often does, "gather the links of the broken chain," and seek to twine them anew around him. But this state of partial carnality into which one may fall, is far removed from the state of complete and controlling carnality out of which one cannot rise. The theory of the Christian life is its possession of spiritual power; the theory of the condition we are here contemplating is its utter destitution of spiritual power.

But Gal. 5 : 16–19, is cited as parallel to the present passage in relation to believers. An exact rendering and a moment's examination, destroy the seeming parallel: "And I say, walk in the Spirit, and do not fulfill the desire of the flesh. For the flesh desireth against the Spirit and the Spirit desireth against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another in order that ye may not do the things which ye would." The persons here addressed are in the Spirit, and as being spiritual are exhorted to walk in the Spirit; of such spiritual condition or walk, the passage now under consideration contains no trace. We there have the antagonism of the flesh and the Spirit—their hostile striving, each *in order to prevent* the person from doing the things which he otherwise would; the flesh seeking to prevent him from following the impulses of the Spirit; the Spirit from following the impulses of the flesh. But of any inability on the part of the believer to perform spiritual works the passage contains not the slightest intimation.

But let us advert again to some other features of our passage, which have been supposed to make for its application to the Christian. The use of the first person and the present tense has been often urged in proof that Paul was describing

his present spiritual conflicts. The use of the present, however, in delineating a past scene is one of the commonest figures in rhetoric, and springs out of one of the most natural laws of the human mind. And also the individualizing of a general and abstract statement and bringing it home to one's self in a concrete form, is frequent with vivid thinkers and writers, and is eminently suited to the fervid genius of Paul. His spirit is all aglow with the truths which he is exhibiting, and with his whole impassioned nature he plunges into the scene which he is delineating, and makes it a present reality. Special reasons, moreover, can be seen in the present case for this vivid dramatic impersonation. Paul was no stranger to the conflict which he so vividly portrays. He had sounded all the deep abysses of that terrible experience. Even in the proudest days of his phariseeism, while exulting in the strictness of his legal morality, and in an outward righteousness in which men could detect no flaw—even then, the lightning flashes of Sinai must have often sent startling illuminations into the chambers of his soul. In the inmost centre of consciousness he had felt strange convictions that his morality was rotten, and his righteousness a sham. He had felt that the spiritual requirements of that law rose heaven-high above his utmost reach of moral effort, and he had often shrunk back from the future with a dreadful presentiment that the end of all was to be ignominious defeat. And thus, in his own personal experience, Paul is recording the universal experience of humanity. He is delineating one of the phases of the universal conflict in that which has transpired in his own soul. His own experience is but the vivid embodiment of the warfare which humanity is always waging, and to which, though under very altered conditions and with the certainty

of a reversed result, even the Christian bosom is not a stranger. Nay, the *actual* conflict is often severest in the Christian, for it is precisely in him that the sleep of death has been broken, and the Spirit has undertaken the work of overthrowing the dominion of the flesh. Still the warfare here waged is not the warfare of the Christian as such, not a warfare which is ever in all its elements exemplified in him; for the Christian is never wholly without spiritual power. And the fact that the apostle is delineating his own former pungent experience, and in this standing as the representative of struggling humanity, abundantly accounts for the outward form of his representation.

Again, the expression, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," has been urged as proving that not an unregenerate, but a renewed man is speaking. It is readily admitted that the language might be so employed; it might be used by one conscious that all his nobler energies were devoted to God and holiness, to indicate that those sinful acts which he performs are so alien to his regenerated nature that they seem to belong to another personality. It might thus be used to indicate a predominant reign of holiness. But such is not its use here, but rather the opposite. For here it refers not to his exceptional acts, but to the whole forces of his practical nature as against his rational and volitional, as being overmastered and controlled by sin. The obvious intention of the language here is to represent a state of complete moral slavery.

But it is urged that the expression (*νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι*), *no more, no longer*, ("it is no more I that do it,") indicates a transition into an altered state. Even Bengel and Olshausen, who take the passage in general as describing an unregenerate

condition, find here an advance toward a better frame of mind.

To this we must reply that the person's situation nowhere appears darker and more hopeless than in verses 21, 23, 24. In truth the word οὐκέτι is, as is held here by Rückert, Meyer, and De Wette, not temporal, but logical. It refers not to a present time as contrasted with a former time, but to an actual, in contrast with a supposed ideal state. This usage has hundreds of illustrations in classical, and several in New Testament Greek, answering to the logical uses of νῦν, νυνί, *now, as the case stands.* Both usages are abundant in Greek, though not sufficiently noticed by the lexicons. In verses 17 and 21 then, of this passage before us, "If I do what I would not, it is no longer I that do it," means "as the case actually stands, it is not I that do it, as under other circumstances it would be." The language indicates no progress toward a better condition. It does not say that it is no longer I that do, as it once was, but it is not I that do it, as under another supposition it would have been.

But we are pointed to the expression: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," as unanswerable evidence that the apostle is describing the Christian warfare; and doubtless it furnishes strong seeming support to this view. And were this the real language of the apostle, we should feel that only the most decisive evidence of the context could prevent our referring it to the Christian, and could hardly account for it, even by supposing that the apostle had thrown back unconsciously, his regenerated emotions into his ante-Christian state, and tinged the conflict under the law with the coloring of the Christian warfare. But in fact the apostle says no such thing. He does not talk about *delighting* in the

law of God; the word which he employs has no such vividness and glow of meaning. It is simply (*συνήδομαι*) *to be pleased with, to have pleasure in*, and does little more than take the act out of the sphere of mere intellectual or moral approval. It is less strong, not only than *τέρπομαι*, *delight* myself, or *ἀγάλλομαι*, *exult*, but even than *χαίρω*, *rejoice*. It is a somewhat heightened expression of the *consent to, give my sanction to*, of verse 16, and in both cases the apostle uses decisive terms, partly because he wishes to emphasize the mind's vindication of the law, and partly because the stronger the testimony of the moral reason to the excellency of virtue, the more odious and formidable appears the enslaving power of sin. A similar principle explains the *I hate* used of the sentiment with which he regards the course in which his sin-enthralled appetites impel him. So repugnant is that course to his moral reason, so thoroughly do all the nobler convictions and impulses of his nature pronounce its condemnation, that it is with no very violent metaphor that he declares that he hates it. There are convictions of the speculative intellect, warm and hearty approvals of the conscience, and glowing imaginative sentiments, which border so closely on the radical affections of the soul, that they are with difficulty discriminated from it. Virtue lives and glows as a conviction in the intellect and as a sentiment in the imagination, when it really has no power over the heart; and he will often dilate admiringly, and even rapturously, on truth, beauty, and goodness, over whose life they have not a particle of practical power, and dwell with loathing and disgust on the very vices that enslave him. And Paul, it should be remembered, deals freely with the actual phenomena of the human consciousness. His fervid and glowing pen pours out the emotions of an ex-

cited soul without stopping to weigh nicely the metaphysical accuracy, or the possible dogmatical misapprehension of his expression. And he here uses the strong and decisive terms of hate and approval, partly because he feels them, and partly because he would render his profoundest homage to the law, and make sin appear exceedingly sinful.

But is not the "inward man" a distinctive characteristic of the Christian, and does not this phrase mark a believer's struggle? We answer that there is nothing in the phrase which should, in advance, limit it to the regenerate. On the other hand, as the person is in the flesh, carnal, with a resisting will and moral sense, nothing is more natural than that over against this outward man, the flesh, he should designate this reason and conscience as the inward man. That this is what the apostle here refers to, is evident not only from the general drift of the context, but from his immediate explanation. "The inner man" is his (νοῦς); his mind, intelligence, reason, not anything that is characteristically Christian. In the Christian we have the "new man," the "new creation," the "spiritual man," as his peculiar attributes, and although this mind (νοῦς) may be applied to him (as in 2 Cor. 4.) as the seat of his spiritual being, it need, by no means, be necessarily thus restricted; and here clearly it is not. The Spirit of God dwelling within the Christian has regenerated and made him spiritual. This is his appropriate description. His proper warfare is a war of the flesh against the Spirit. Here the warfare is of the flesh against the reason. The law of the mind is in unequal conflict with the law of sin. There is no trace of that spiritual being which the New Testament everywhere ascribes to the Christian; no trace of a heavenly birth, of a divine renewal. The person has never been lifted into a

higher than his native element, never been furnished with supernatural weapons, never endowed with aught higher than his natural sentiments of right and duty, for carrying on the conflict. Hence the heaven-wide difference between the two conflicts. The one is that of the flesh and the Spirit, in which the Spirit is systematically and steadily triumphant. The other is that of the flesh and the moral reason, in which the reason is permanently and hopelessly enthralled.

Again, the closing declaration of the passage is deemed to demand the Christian interpretation. It runs in our version: "So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." The rendering is somewhat unfortunate. More accurately it is: "So, then, I myself, or I, of myself, serve with the mind, indeed, the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." As thus translated the passage is a mere resumption, though from a now altered point of view, of the whole preceding description, and yields, when carefully examined, no support to the Augustinian interpretation. First, the I, by or of myself (as before remarked, a very familiar use of *αὐτός* in Greek), naturally marks the condition of the combatant before the accession of the new and divine helper whom the last sentence brings to his aid. Secondly, in accordance with this, it is, as before, only with his *mind*, his understanding, his reason, that he as yet serves the law of God, not with the Spirit, as afterward, when he enters upon his spiritual state. Thirdly, we ask the particular attention of the Greek student to the particles and the order of the clauses. With *μέν* and *δέ* the second clause is regularly the higher and decisive one; the former merely conceding a point, but leaving the stress of the statement to fall upon the latter, as in English, "He is learned indeed, but foolish"; "he is rich, to

be sure, but miserable." And thus the introductory clause (with μέν) may often be properly expressed in English by *while* or *although*. In the present case then, the exact force of the passage is, "So, then, I, by myself, serve with the mind, it is true, the law of God, but (as the countervailing and decisive fact) with my flesh the law of sin"; or, "So, then, I, of myself, although with the mind I serve the law of God, yet with the flesh serve the law of sin." Thus by the structure of the sentence, the decisive idea, that on which the mind is left to rest as determining the person's moral condition is, that he is, after all σαρκινός, and serves with his flesh the law of sin. The darker aspect of the case is the final and controlling one. The serving of the law of God with the reason, is good as far as it goes, yet it cannot avail to break or annul the tyranny of the flesh. Had it described a Christian, the order of the clauses would have demanded to be reversed: So, then, I with my flesh, it is true, serve the law of sin, but with the mind or the spirit the law of God. As it is, it is only one more repetition before the writer bids good-bye to that state forever—of the so-often repeated thought of the unequal strife—*impar congressus Achilli*—of his aspiring reason with the over-mastering and enchaining flesh.

If it is further objected to our wide application of the passage, that Paul speaks so definitely of the law of God as that which claims his approval, and not virtue, right, moral excellence, we must remember that Paul was a Jew, belonging to a nation that had received an express and immediate revelation from God, and one whose conceptions of virtue and vice, moral good and evil, wisdom and folly, clustered around and centered in the revealed word of God. They were left to no vague imaginations of beauty, truth, and goodness. The

whole world of spiritual ideas, came to them in a form terribly concrete. All that the pagan world contemplated of the true, the beautiful, and the good, was to the Jew summed in that law of God which Infinite Holiness had flashed into his face and conscience from the awful summits of Sinai. This law the Jew obeyed, when he did good. This law he approved, when he approved the right. In this were summed up all his conceptions of the moral government of the world, and the moral obligations of the race. As, therefore, the whole system of redemption comes to us clothed in Jewish costume, and we have to expand its local Jewish symbols into world-wide principles, so the great conflict of humanity here takes the peculiar type of Judaism—in fact its highest type—and the battle which in a Gentile, who was a law to himself, would have been with the law of right and duty as traced on the tablet of his conscience, becomes here a direct issue with the outward revealed ordinances of a holy God.

And again, we must remember that we have the struggle as distilled through the alembic of the apostle's heart. It is scarcely possible that Paul could record such a conflict—one in which he had borne so vital a part, and whose subsiding billows still heaved like the tossings of a spent storm through his daily experience, and from which he had been so delivered, without touching its leading features with the retrospective tinge of his Christian consciousness. The believer, who is gathering up into his own personality the elements of the universal experience of humanity, cannot but interpenetrate the portraiture with some tokens of his regenerated feelings. He will describe the conflict, not so much as it appears to the person who is blindly, darkly waging it, as in the way in which it finally discloses its full significance to his enlight-

ened spiritual perception. From his higher ground of spiritual illumination he now discovers the precise elements and the real scope of the conflict, and he can hardly contemplate that strife and that victory, that darkness and that light, the infinite wretchedness of the bondage and the infinite blessedness of the salvation, without giving utterance to the emotions which they inspire. Hence the piercing shriek of the helpless combatant; hence the exultant welcome of the dawning deliverance. But though thus cast in a Jewish mold, and embodied in the personality and tinged with the reflex sentiment of an apostle, the contest is substantially that of the natural man of all ages struggling under his convictions of moral duty, whether gathered more faintly from the dim disclosures of the reason, or more clearly from the express enactments of the law of God,—and struggling in vain. It is the slavery of human nature—until endowed with spiritual freedom and power through the cross of Christ.

But having looked at and, as we believe, obviated the main objections to our interpretation, to make assurance doubly sure, let us follow the apostle a moment into the next chapter, and mark the contrast there presented to the painful portraiture which we have been contemplating. "I thank God," says the apostle, looking back upon his former self in the light of his present self, "through Jesus Christ our Lord! He will deliver me from this body of death." And with the opening of the next chapter the deliverance has come. My condition is completely reversed. Before, I was in the flesh, and predominantly carnal; now I am spiritual. Before, I was sold under sin, and its helpless captive and slave; now the law of the Spirit of life has made me free from the law of sin and death. Before, sin ruled as a tyrant in my flesh; now the

Son of God has condemned sin in my flesh. Before, I could will indeed, but willing was fruitless, and performance was impossible; now the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in me, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The "law of my mind" has thus given place to the "law of the Spirit"; the weakness of the law through the supremacy of the flesh, has been replaced by the divine energy of the gospel; its enslaving and condemning power by the emancipating and pardoning efficacy of the blood of Christ. Its spirituality is now met by an answering spirituality in myself. The two states are the completest possible antitheses to each other. They have nothing in common but the wretched bondman of the one, transformed into the exultant freeman of the other. They are separated from each other by the whole diameter of the moral being. That helpless slave, that wretched thrall of sin, working out in blind bewilderment the dictates of imperious lust, struggling with his chain, and at last uttering forth a shriek of agony and despair, is he the man whom we now behold exulting in spiritual freedom, and producing in joyous spontaneity the fruits of righteousness? Not unless every law of language is reversed. Passing from the seventh to the eighth chapter of the Romans is passing into a new atmosphere, is entering a new world. From a chaos of convulsed and conflicting elements we emerge into harmony, and light, and joy. No more being in the flesh; no more sold under sin; no more servile and hateful task-work; no more bowing of my Godlike reason in hateful bondage to the flesh; no more abortive endeavor to keep a law which, while it commands my homage, utters my condemnation! All this has passed away forever. It is superseded by a new state of spiritual freedom, purity, and progress, of assured victory and everlasting triumph.

But do we degrade the passage by transferring its struggle from the bosom of the Christian to the larger sphere of universal humanity? Is this conflict of the ages, this sad embroilment of man with himself, this moral civil war, unworthy of a record by the inspired pen of the apostle? Rather, is it not eminently suitable that a discussion, whose grand thesis is universal guilt and universal condemnation—no justification by deeds of law, whether written on tables of stone or on the tablet of the natural conscience—should wind up with a living picture of the struggle under that law, its inspirations, its impotence, and its despair? Is not this a fitting background —this black canvas of the world's spiritual thralldom—on which to portray the glorious deliverance of the gospel? Look back over the preceding chapters of the Epistle, and you will see how completely the apostle has prepared the way for this delineation. It is the natural summing up of that whole dark picture of depravity and ruin, of bondage under the double, yet identical law of Sinai and the conscience; the gathering up of all its elements into one bitter and deadly experience. It is the whole moral life of humanity concentered in the tempestuous convulsions of a single soul. This struggle is to Paul, as it is in fact, real, earnest, and profoundly significant. It is, next to the gospel, and as preparatory to the gospel, the one vital, interpretative fact in the moral history of the race—the key to the mystery of its deepest strivings. The consciousness of sin, the vague but dark sense of moral derangement and the endeavor to repair it, have called forth the resources of legislation and philosophy; for this, government has reared its elaborate framework, and constructed its penal code; for this, sages have explored the heights and depths of speculation. The divine philosophy of

the Academy sought by raising its votaries to the communion of the eternally good and fair, to emancipate them from the thralldom of moral evil. Aristotle lavished the resources of the subtlest intellect of earth on a system not merely of ideal, but of practical virtue. The rugged doctrines of the Porch, proclaiming the sole excellence of virtue, and the sufficiency of the good man to himself, sought to lay a solid basis of virtuous attainment. The moralist has labored through long years to fashion and consolidate those elements of upright character which should meet his high ideal. But all in vain. The most stringent ordinances of legislation, the most energetic forms of government, the most splendid systems of philosophy, the purest codes of morals, the most thoroughly disciplined individual virtues, have been tossed like a feather in the tempest, on the surging tides of human passion. The evil has been substantially untouched.

> This uneradicable taint of sin,
> This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,

has still shed over the universal heart its poisonous influence, and no character so pure as to escape its contamination, no virtue so vital as not to wither beneath its breath. Deep in the central heart of humanity, unreached by the will, has lain that dark, mysterious, fathomless fount of evil, welling up with exhaustless vitality in every human bosom, and in every age and clime pouring forth its waters of bitterness and death.

Such are the foe and the conflict of unaided humanity; and when the revealed law of God enters the arena, it intensifies, but changes neither the essential nature, nor the issue of the struggle. Sin appears more hideous, virtue more divinely fair, and alike the authority, the excellence, and the threaten-

ings of the law combined to enforce its claims. But all still in vain. Sinai is as powerless as the halls of heathen justice; the Synagogue is as inoperative as the Academy or the Porch; the law traced by the finger of Jehovah on tables of stone is as unavailing as the law traced less distinctly, but even more indelibly, on the living tablet of the conscience. Both are alike impotent against the dreadful league of flesh and sin. Human lust is mightier than "all that saint, sage, or sophist ever writ," backed by the immediate interposition of Jehovah. Under that Mount that burns with fire, beneath the very thunders of his voice, it will turn to its sensualities and its idolatries.

In the presence of the revealed law, then, sin only comes out into fuller hideousness and more terrible power; becomes more intensely malignant, more "exceeding sinful," and wields its scorpion lash with fiercer fury over the soul. Then the writhing spirit gnaws its chain in desperate anguish as it awakes to the double conviction of the magnitude and the hopelessness of the struggle. As the forms of ideal virtue which it had before half courted, half shrunk from, and played with in sportive dalliance as they seemed now just dissolving into the airy forms of imagination, now limned in sterner outline to the clear eye of the reason—as these concentrate and embody themselves in the immediate, authoritative, unrepealable mandates of Jehovah, then comes the grip, the crisis, the agony of the struggle, the sense of utter impotence and awful bondage, of the dire malignity of the fiend who enthrones himself in the flesh, and in the very teeth of the dictates of prudence and the reproaches of conscience; in the face of all that reason can discern of abstract goodness and all that revelation can disclose of infinite majesty and excel-

lence, drives his victim with reluctant step, but with open eye, into the gulf of despair and the flames of perdition. It is this struggle, going on everywhere, where man has not sunk to the level of the brute, and indicated in every deprecatory prayer, in every bloody rite of superstition, in every slaughtered victim, in the fruit of the body given for the sin of the soul, in every form of ascetic devotion, the sackcloth, the fastings, the vigils, the self-scourgings and tortures, all submitted to pacify the vindictive Nemesis that lives eternal in the human conscience, in every moral aspiration, in every sigh of penitence and pang of remorse. It is this quenchless, all-pervading, everlasting conflict which, with a pen of light and fire, the apostle has drawn out in the seventh of Romans. And here too, we have the divine deliverance from this awful bondage; the Canaan of heavenly peace, which awaits the toiler over this dreary desert of Sinai and of sin. What a flood of holy gratitude, what a fathomless tide of joy gushes up in those triumphant words: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

And finally, if from this interpretation of our passage, the disciples of Pelagius and Arminius can gather aid and comfort, they are welcome to do it. If it sheds any particle of light favorable to their assertion of the native innocence and goodness of man, we fail to see it. Surely they knew not what they did, when they took such an ally into their camp. It is, to my mind, the darkest and most decisively melancholy picture of the natural condition of humanity—of its obstinate and determined bias to evil, that is contained in the sacred records. There is scarcely between the lids of the Bible another passage which goes so thoroughly to the central core of human depravity; which tears away the veil of spiritual

self-conceit with so relentless a hand; which so blasts, as with mildew, every springing germ of legal righteousness. Whatever of good it discloses lies in that intellectual and volitional part of our nature which God has still left within us as his abiding witness; but all the practical and effective forces are under the dominion of evil. The passage, thus understood, is the great bulwark of Calvinism, the natural ally of the profoundest views of original depravity, and the moral bondage of the human will. It is Paul's standing protest against all those rose-water theories of human nature which represent it as just ready to develop angelic qualities, and spring up into its native realm of purity and bliss. No. Deep in man's soul, it shows a dreadful monster to be expelled, a gigantic despotism to be overthrown, a malignant power that corrupts his affections, enthralls his will, nullifies every moral endeavor, resists effectually all that man or God can do for his redemption, until the atoning blood and the spiritual power of the Cross break the tyranny, and lead him forth into the glorious freedom, the progressive sanctification, and the upward path of the children of God.

II.

RENOVATION OF PHYSICAL NATURE AT THE RESURRECTION.

"FOR I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy of comparison with the glory which is about to be revealed to us. For the longing desire of the creation is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God,—for it, the creation, was subjected to frailty, not of its own will, but on account of him who subjected it,—in the hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and is in pangs together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, though having the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, awaiting our filiation [the sonship], the redemption of our bodies" (Rom. 8 : 18–24).

It is not my purpose to review the various opinions which have been entertained respecting this passage, by different interpreters. It has not only called forth the resources of industry and learning, but given ample scope to the vagaries of fancy. When the right interpretation shall be given, it will probably carry with it its own evidence,—an evidence obviating the necessity of exposing all the absurd theories and whimsical conjectures of all who have shed the darkness of their own false reasonings upon the illuminated pages of inspired truth. Already, I believe, this passage has yielded

in a great measure, if not entirely, to the sober and searching methods of modern investigation; to that diligent examination of words and phrases which, however humble an employment it may seem to furnish, is yet our only avenue to a certain and satisfactory knowledge of things, the portico of the grand temple of religious truth. The biblical student of comparatively humble acquisitions can smile at many of the fanciful conjectures and fruitless, because ill-directed, efforts of men, with whom in ability or learning he would be far from challenging a comparison. Even now, I believe, both in this country and in Germany, there is a gradual approximation toward harmony of views. It could not, perhaps, be expected that a passage like the present, of difficult and long contested import, should in all points be satisfactorily settled by the efforts of any single mind. One will, perhaps, strike out the general idea,—will seize upon the clew, by whose guidance others will thread the labyrinth, until at last all its intricacies are unravelled and its recesses explored.

I do not propose to comment separately upon all the words and phrases of the passage, but to touch lightly upon those on which there is no difference of opinion. I shall dwell rather upon those portions which are essential to a right apprehension of the general scope of the passage. Its keynote is struck in the verse immediately preceding that with which my translation commences. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if we suffer with him (*συμπάσχειν*), that we may be also glorified with him (*συνδοξασθῶμεν*)." Thus bringing the sufferings (*παθήματα*) of Christians into immediate contrast with their future glorification (*δόξα*), the mind of the apostle

instantly takes fire. In a manner strikingly characteristic, he proceeds to give utterance, as far as he is able, to the conceptions by which his soul is filled. But what is the point of view from which he contemplates the glory that is to be revealed to the sons of God? On what stage in the career of the sons of immortality does he fix, as furnishing the most full and perfect contrast to the weight of suffering, that bows them in this vale of tears? In other words, what is the period referred to when they are to be glorified together (*συνδοξασθῶμεν*) with Christ? For, that one and the same period is indicated by this and the following expressions,—*the glory which is about to be revealed to us* (*τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς*),—*the manifestation of the sons of God* (*τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ*), *the glorious freedom of the children of God;* and finally *the sonship,—the ransom of our body*,—that all these expressions, I repeat, point to one and the same occasion, does not, I think, admit a doubt. And what is the occasion? We are pointed most distinctly to the general resurrection. Overleaping all the intervening period, and overlooking, as it were, all preceding and minor displays of the Christian's glory, the mind of the apostle fastens upon the time when the glorified body, raised from the dust in renovated youth and beauty, shall be reunited to the glorified spirit, and the relation of the children of God shall be recognized and announced before an assembled universe. Let us recur for a moment to the expressions as they occur. When, according to the representations of the New Testament, are Christians to be glorified together with Christ (*συνδοξασθῶμεν*)? When, in the only sense acknowledged by the Scriptures, is to take place the manifestation (*τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν*) of the sons of God? Compare here Col.

3 : 4: "When Christ our life is manifested, then shall ye also be manifested with him in glory." Compare too, 1 Thess. 4 : 13, a passage directly relevant to our subject. And to what period, again, may we so justly refer the glorious freedom of the sons of God, as to that which witnesses their triumph over death, the last enemy, and emancipates their entire nature from the thralldom to which sin had subjected it? But if the above expressions left any doubt, it is dissipated by the final, most explicit statement of the apostle himself, in which he couples the filiation (*υἱοθεσία*)—evidently another expression for the manifestation of the sons of God (*ἀποκάλυψιν τ. υ. τ. θ.*)—the full and public recognition of their relation, and their investiture with the glory which belongs to it—with the redemption of the body (*ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος*), making the two circumstances, if not identical, at least coincident in time.

Here then, it seems, is an important clew to guide us in the interpretation of the passage. And we cannot avoid the conviction, that here many of the interpreters have more or less failed. Some throw the resurrection entirely out of view. Others, who admit a reference to it, yet fail to give it due prominence,—to make it the foreground of the picture,—to let it occupy that place which it manifestly occupied in the mind of the apostle. I think the phraseology of the passage, especially taken in connection with the general tenor of the New Testament representations, forces upon us the conviction that the apostle here refers definitely to the period of the resurrection, and that, not so much because this was the advantageous view from which to draw the contrast, but because this was ever uppermost in his mind, when he reflected on the future glory of the people of God. Indeed, it cannot

have escaped the attentive reader of the apostolic writings, how frequent and striking are the allusions to that period, and how it pervaded and colored all their religious hopes. The passage which we have quoted from Col. 3 : 4, is full of significance, and furnishes a striking commentary on that under consideration. "Ye are dead," says the apostle, "and your life is hid with Christ in God." The Christian life is now *hidden, concealed.* In his separate existence, and real character, he is scarcely recognized. When, then, is he to be manifested? When honored with the title, and clothed with the glory, that belong to his station. When, in other words, is his manifestation (*ἀποκάλυψις*)—his filiation (*υἱοθεσία*)—to take place? "When Christ, our life," proceeds the apostle, "is manifested, then shall ye also be manifested with him in glory."

In 1 Cor. 15, this topic furnishes the theme of one of the most animated and eloquent discussions found on the pages of this always animated writer. He shows how it follows the death of Christ, and pre supposes it; how it involves the very cardinal doctrines of the gospel, and is a vital element of the Christian's faith and hope. He dwells upon its scenes and its practical uses, with a minuteness, a variety, and a fullness, which show that it absorbed the energies and interests of his soul; that it was with him an ever-present and inspiring truth, held not merely as a tenet essential to the completeness of a scheme of doctrines, but as a truth fruitful of practical influences and heavenly consolation,—pressing on his heart with the might of a near and overwhelming reality; the consummation and glory of the gospel; the grand object of Christian hope; the grand incentive to Christian faithfulness.

It will not, I trust, be irrelevant in this connection, to present a passage of some length, from 2 Peter 3 : 10–16. I shall give it with a few not perhaps very necessary deviations from the common version: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with a crash, and the elements shall burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works in it shall be burned up. While then, all these things are being dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening on the coming of the day of God, in which the heavens being wrapt in fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall burn and melt. But we, according to his promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless, and consider the long-suffering of the Lord to be salvation. As also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as also in all his epistles speaking concerning these things."

This interesting passage needs no comment; compared with Rom. 8 : 19, 1 Thess. 4 : 13–18, 1 Cor. 15, it sheds a flood of light upon the uses which the apostles made of the doctrine of the resurrection.

If I have succeeded in settling this point, the way is opened for deciding, satisfactorily, upon the meaning of the much contested κτίσις. I need not dwell upon the origin and possible significations of this word. Derived from (κτίζειν), *to create*, it denotes primarily *the act of creating;* secondly, as synonymous with (κτίσμα), *the thing created, the creation.* It has, I believe, in its ordinary use, about the same latitude as

the word creation, and may, according to its connection, refer chiefly to inanimate nature, or include sentient beings. That it is ever, or could be without the utmost harshness, employed to denote Christians, there is no evidence. The expression (καινὴ κτίσις), *a new creature*, or *a new creation*, furnishes no ground for such a supposition. The question, then, is between that view of it which includes and refers chiefly to sentient beings, and that which refers exclusively to inanimate nature. Does it, in other words, in the passage under consideration, denote *men in general, mankind*, or *inanimate existence, nature?* If the view which I have taken above be correct, the question is easily, nay, is already decided. The κτίσις is introduced as looking with earnest longing for the period when the sons of God shall be manifested, in the hope of sharing in their glorious deliverance. Is this true of the world of unconverted men? Could the heathen of, or before the age of the apostle, be said, in any possible sense, to be anticipating the resurrection period, with the hope of being themselves participators in its benefits? This point is too plain to need argument. Of all the doctrines or facts unfolded in the word of God,—of all the truths discoverable by reason of which the gospel is the depository, none, perhaps, bears so decidedly as this the impress of its superhuman origin—none is so far from having visited the loftiest visions of the sublimest speculators. The Pythagorean metempsychosis bears to it no analogy. Theologians have fancied that in the Platonic triad they could discover the germ of even the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity. The sacrifices of the pagan world have been regarded as embodying a dim conception of the atonement. But the resurrection of the dead is, we might perhaps say, the one great fact

that belongs exclusively to Christianity. It is certainly a fact, of which there is no evidence that it had ever entered the conception of man, until "life and immortality were brought to light through the gospel." And had it occurred to the minds of the pagans, it could not have come as a welcome doctrine. Plato states it as the prerogative of those who had purified their souls by philosophy, that they were exempted from the necessity of re-entering a body when they had once "shuffled off this mortal coil." The body was regarded as always and necessarily an enemy to the freedom and purity of the soul, and the pagan could have conceived no process, as either probable or possible, by which the spiritualized body should become at once the handmaid of its virtues and the promoter of its enjoyments. And, keeping distinctly in view the scriptural doctrine of the resurrection, all reference to that "longing after immortality," which agitates the breast of universal man, those high aspirations which indicate at once his origin and destiny, become entirely irrelevant. However true in point of fact, they have no bearing on the case before us.

The only meaning then, which remains for (κτίσις) *creation* in the present case, is *the inanimate creation, nature.* By an animated, we do not say bold, prosopopœia, the writer introduces universal nature as longing for the period of the complete emancipation of the sons of God. The argument is *a fortiori*—for it contains the substance though not the form of an argument. It reasons from the less to the greater. If the benefits to be reaped by irrational existence from the scenes of that day are so great as to justify it in earnestly expecting them, what shall be its results to immortal intelligences—the sons of God—who are to be the princi-

pal participators in its glories? If its subordinate and incidental results are so unspeakably desirable, what may they anticipate on whom it shall confer its "weight of glory?"

The sentiment derived from this interpretation is amply sustained by other declarations of Scripture. I will not go back to the prophetic writings, although it is certain that among the Jews there existed a belief in the future renovation. Neither would I lay much stress on the *renovation* (παλιγγενεσία) of Matt. 19 : 28, *or the restoration of all things* (ἀποκατάστασεως πάντων) of Acts 3 ; 21, as these expressions are too general to be a safe foundation for argument. When, however, the fact is clearly made out from other sources, they may justly be regarded as corroborative evidence. We need but appeal to the passage already quoted from Peter, in a similar connection, to place the matter beyond a doubt. But "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The words, "according to his promise," decidedly oppose our interpreting this as the mere figurative language of prophecy. It points us to some specific promise made by the Saviour, while on earth, and a general expectation as the result of that promise. Here is no evidence of a state of prophetic rapture, but a declaration of a universally pervading belief, founded on the explicit testimony of Christ himself. But, even conceding the representation to be a μῦθος, *myth*, and that they did not expect a literal renovation of the heavens and earth, still, inasmuch as Peter has employed this mode of representation, why may not Paul have done so, when treating of the same subject? Especially as it is in connection with this general topic that Peter quotes Paul, as having treated largely upon these subjects in his epistles.

But this general view receives still further confirmation from a right understanding of the clause contained in the parenthesis. We have connected ἐπ' ἐλπίδι, *in hope*, not with ὑπετάγη, *was subjected*, but with ἀπεκδέχεται, *is awaiting*. It thus introduces the reason of the anxious longing of the κτίσις, *creation*, for the period in question. The construction seems thus more simple and unembarassed, and will, we think, commend itself to the judgment of the reader. The clause in the parenthesis, then, intimates the reasonableness of the expectation entertained by the κτίσις, *creation*. The reason is, that it had no agency in the act which subjected it to its state of bondage, but, guiltless itself, was so reduced solely on account of another. We give to διὰ, its ordinary meaning, with the accusative, viz., *in consequence of, on account of*, and thus refer the τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, *him who subjected it*, to man, as it seems difficult to see in what sense it could be referred to Jehovah. If we give to διὰ the signification of ὑπο, *by*, with the genitive, thus representing Jehovah as the agent, a meaning sufficiently correct is, indeed, made out, but one having no obvious relevancy to the design of the apostle. That of the other is clear and striking. The earth was not brought into subjection on its own account. "Cursed is the ground for *thy* sake," is the emphatic declaration of the Judge to the guilty man, and one which sets in a striking light the truth of the passage before us. As it was not then by its own agency, or for its own guilt that it was subjected, but solely as the innocent participator in the punishment of another, the creation may rationally hope—such is the tacit implication,—that when the last vestiges of the curse are removed from the offender, the unwilling and unoffending sharer in the curse shall receive a like liberation. There is a tacit appeal to the justice of the Deity, an

implied assertion that he will not suffer the innocent victim to remain involved in evils from which their guilty author has been liberated. This idea might receive a much more extended elucidation than I can now give it, and one which would go far to establish, on independent grounds, the probability of the future restoration of the material world. And the natural period of such a renovation would be the time when it had ceased to be the repository of the sleeping dust of sin-ruined, but ransomed man—when death, the final enemy, is annihilated by the resurrection of the bodies of the believers to life and glory. What more natural, what more consonant with all we know of the Divine economy, than that in the moment when physical nature, which was molded by the plastic hand of its Creator into innumerable forms of beauty and perfection, and scanned by the Omniscient eye was pronounced "good," shall spring from the bondage of its corruption, be freed from the stains of sin, and, renovated and beautified, become the meet abode of righteousness? Christ was revealed that he might destroy the works of the devil. One of these works was the subjugation of the natural world to natural, as a faint type of moral, evil. The curse which was laid upon the earth, was as much the result of the malignant efforts of the great adversary, as the death, temporal and spiritual, inflicted upon Adam and his posterity. And does not the full accomplishment of the avowed purpose of the Son of God's appearing, his complete triumph over death and the devil, who has the power of death, require that he rescue the earth also from the evils which it shared, in common with its guilty inhabitants?

I have dwelt so long upon the main topics involved in the passage, that I have room but for a brief comment upon a few

of the particular words that have not already been noticed. *Λογίζομαι, I reckon, compute, estimate*—a weighty term, and peculiarly forcible, where the writer is about to balance the future glory of the saints against their present sufferings. *Γάρ, for;* Prof. Stuart translates it, in this case, *moreover.* There is no reason here for departing from the ordinary import of the particle. Indeed, we can scarcely conceive a case in which the English word *for* is more appropriate and exact as a particle of connection.

Αποκάλυψιν—θεοῦ, the manifestation, not of the glory of the sons of God, but *the manifestation of the sons of God;* that is, the public recognition of their relation. (See Matt. 25 : 31, seq. Col. 3 : 4.)

Ματαότητι, emptiness, vanity, frailty, as appears from the *δουλείας φθορᾶς,* to which it is equivalent.

Αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις. We should not notice this simple phrase, but for a mistranslation of Prof. Stuart, who renders it, "*the same creation* (as if the reading were *ἡ αὐτὴ κτίσις*), and proceeds to urge against Prof. Tholuck an objection, whose force depends entirely on his erroneous rendering. Tholuck infers justly "that *αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις* indicates a descent from the noble to the ignoble part of creation," as much as to say, that the *κτίσις, creation,* longs for the full deliverance of the children of God, in the hope that even the *κτίσις, creation* itself may share in the same glorious freedom. To this, Prof. Stuart replies, "that such an exegesis would necessarily imply that a higher and nobler *κτίσις* had been already mentioned, in the preceding context, with which the inferior one is now compared." This would be true, were the reading *ἡ αὐτὴ κτίσις,* but as it stands, "even the *κτίσις* itself," the very form of expression implies that no other *κτίσις* has been mentioned, but

some other object, for which the κτίσις regards the event as principally to take place, while itself shall have a subordinate and humble share in its results.

Πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις, the whole creation, all nature, an expression rising in emphasis, and perhaps more extensive in signification than κτίσις alone. I submit the question to those whose more immediate province it is to decide, whether, while κτίσις generally in the New Testament refers to the material creation, πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις, comprehends also sentient beings. There is nothing in the present passage to oppose this view. The πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις is not represented as looking forward to the resurrection, but only as involved in common pain and anguish; nor will any one who knows the force of the connective οὐ μόνον δὲ, draw from them an opposite conclusion.

Αὐτοι τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ Πνεύματος ἔχοντες. We ourselves while *having the first-fruits,* both apostles, it would seem, and Christians generally. Christians are all alike partakers of the Spirit and yet alike groaning in their present state of imperfection and suffering, and looking forward to the period of their complete emancipation. As at the commencement of the passage, the apostle couples himself with his brethren, so he does at the close.

I have thus given my general view of this difficult, interesting, and sublime passage. I willingly leave it to be compared with that which makes κτίσις, *creation,* refer to mankind in general. It is readily seen what a stoop the latter requires us to make from the elevation to which we are raised on the glowing wing of apostolic faith and hope. It, in fact, perfectly unchristianizes the whole passage. It degrades "the manifestation of the sons of God"—their glorious deliverance from bondage—their υἱοθεσία, *sonship,* the public and solemn cere-

mony of affiliation, into a something or a nothing, which has been anticipated with earnest longing by the whole heathen world! Tell us not that the apostle brings forward such a view to cheer his Christian brethren in their state of trial and infirmity. Ask us not to believe that he has led their minds away from their own glorious resurrection—a reality with whose truth and importance his mind was all imbued and glowing—to a heathen expectation, which never existed, and which, if it had existed, was never to be realized! Not only is there no inexplicable *lacuna*, in the omission of the heathen world, or the race of men in general, but such an allusion would have been wholly inappropriate. True, they are no less in bondage to frailty and corruption than the natural world; but it is not true that they, like that, can with propriety be represented as looking forward to the resurrection as their period of deliverance. And why? Because it will bring no deliverance to them. The world of mankind, so far from welcoming the gospel either entirely ignores, or shrinks from it as that which will determine irretrievably the perdition of the rebellious. On the contrary, there is the utmost propriety in asserting this of nature. And why? Simply because it is a fact—at least, because it was the current opinion of Christians of that age, an opinion sanctioned, or rather originated, by the express promise of the Messiah himself. No good reason, then, can be shown for denying to Paul the license employed by his colleagues in composing the sacred canon.

With those who regard the figure as unwarrantably bold, there will be, we believe, few to sympathize. We will not dwell upon the accustomed boldness of oriental and prophetic imagery, in which the sea, the earth, the mountains, the val-

leys, are made not only fraught with intelligence and emotion, but by a still greater stretch of imagination, are endowed with hands, eyes, feet, and made to perform acts corresponding to these endowments. The figure in question hardly allies itself, in this respect, to oriental imagery. It is a figure, such as in every nation and age would spontaneously suggest itself to a vivid and powerful imagination, in the contemplation of such facts. What bosom does not thrill with the conception—what taste does not readily admit, at once, the propriety and grandeur of the figure, in which Robert Hall represents creation as clothing herself in sackcloth, and a shriek of unutterable agony rending the framework of universal nature, over the perdition of a single soul? But when the theme is the general resurrection,—with the weight of glory which will be bestowed on the people of God,—when Omnipotence shall lavish its treasures of grandeur and of glory, how immeasurably greater the propriety of representing universal nature as instinct with life, and awaiting, with earnest longing the happy period in whose results, in themselves inconceivably glorious, it is so largely to participate. Bold as the figure seems to a superficial contemplation, it sinks into tame propriety by the side of the mighty subject which it is designed to illustrate.

And, finally, may we not find in this passage another instance of the use which the primitive Christians made of the doctrine of the resurrection? With what vital energy and animating power it came home to their hearts! How it prompted them to labor, supported them in trial, and consoled them in affliction! May not the modern church inquire, how far in this respect she has partaken of the apostolic spirit? The doctrine of the resurrection is, indeed, incorporated in our articles of

faith, and occasionally dwelt upon in our preaching and contemplations as a sublime truth, a glorious reality. But has it due prominence in our reflections? Do we look and "hasten forward" to the coming of our Lord? Does the Christian preacher avail himself of the utmost efficiency of this instrument, as a means of keeping alive and spreading a deep-toned and active piety? Does it press upon Christians in general its motives to obedience? Is it cherished as a vital doctrine of the gospel, intimately connected with the resurrection of our Lord, livingly intertwined with all our hopes of future blessedness, and animating us to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as it conveys to us the assurance and the pledge that our labor is not in vain in the Lord?

III.

THE PAROUSIA AND ITS ATTENDANT EVENTS.

1 Corinthians 15: 20-28.

THE New Testament contains two or three passages which may, perhaps, be termed "monadic" in their character. While most of the Scripture teachings appear in manifold forms and depend for their attestation on no single passage, in these the truth, as perhaps of less practical importance, is left to their single utterance. Such, if I rightly interpret it, is the passage in which Peter declares the personal preaching of the risen Christ to the impenitent victims of the Flood. Such, though not without one or two other probable allusions (as 2 Thess. 2: 3), seems the apocalyptic—symbolical, yet none the less real—revelation of the millennial glory of the church, followed by a brief apostasy just preceding the final catastrophe. Eminently such, and more signal perhaps than either, is the passage indicated at the head of this article, which stands alone in revealing one or two remarkable features of that critical point when the scenes of time shall open out on the issues of eternity. These are the abdication by the Son of his temporary universal dominion, and the surrender of his vice-royalty to the hands from which he had received it. This special point is confined strictly to verses 24 and 28; yet, as it is intertwined in the entire passage (ver. 20–28), forming a connected whole, I propose to include in my discussion also the passage in which it lies imbedded. On the abdication,

opinion is nearly unanimous; the statements of the apostle seem too explicit to allow much diversity. On the *results* of the abdication, I fear that my opinions are not wholly shared by most interpreters. In the rest of the passage the most important question is, whether it teaches a double or triple order, or class (*tagma*), in the resurrection ; and thus, whether the *end* (τὸ τέλος) is the last act of the resurrection itself, or, as the language scanned more closely may imply, the closing scene following this.

But besides this, another point: The memorable passage (ver. 20–28) which opens this unique glimpse into the world's closing scene,—the surrender of the Son's delegated sway,—is interposed amid a glowing strain of reflection on the fact and the necessity of the Christian resurrection (ver. 13–19 ; ver. 29–33) on the emptiness, apart from this, of the Christian hope, and the wretchedness of the Christian life. The persistent earnestness of this strain shows how deep a hold it has taken on the mind of the apostle ; how the sufferings of the infant church are to him matters of the deepest and darkest reality. Follow for a moment his course of thought. The resurrection of the dead, he argues, is the logical condition of the resurrection of Christ—as the resurrection of Christ is the causal condition of the resurrection of the dead. If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen, the apostle's preaching is false, and the disciples' faith is vain. They that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished, and the believer, imperilled in the present and hopeless of the future, is the most miserable of men. So from verses 12 to 19. After turning away for a moment to the brighter and glorious side, he resumes at verse 29 : Since what shall they do who are baptized for the dead,—whose very baptism pledges them to death,—if the dead rise

not? Why are they so baptized? Why do alike laity and apostles (2 Cor. 6 : 4–10) stand in perpetual jeopardy, live a life of daily dying, contend in deadlier than gladiatorial struggles, and push aside the cup of worldly pleasure which a wiser atheism commends to their lips?

It is now into this course of thought that the apostle has interjected at verse 20 the remarkable passage upon which I have undertaken to comment. It appears strictly as a digression, as if he were turning away, in relief to himself and his readers, from that dark alternative, to the brighter side of the picture, while however the digression carries forward his readers to the climax of his thought, the overthrow of death in the resurrection, and to another equally wondrous scene beyond. Christ, he hastens to declare, *is* risen from the dead, the forerunner of his people; the death-wound inflicted on the race by the first Adam is healed by the Second; and the glimpse thus caught, and the vista thus opened into the future, he follows to an issue which we may doubt whether he had in contemplation when he started the digression. That altered governmental relation of the universe to its Father and its Redeemer which follows the resurrection may possibly have now first broken upon the vision of the apostle.

The passage which opens upon the eye of the reader these altered relations, I render as follows, making some changes which do not in the main affect the thought, but improve very materially, I think, the structure and rhetoric of the sentence, and bring the apostle's discussion of the resurrection to a much more forcible and appropriate conclusion:

"But as it is, in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that have fallen asleep. For since

through a man is death, through a man is also the resurrection of the dead. But each in his own class; as a first-fruits, Christ; afterward, they that belong to Christ, at his coming. Then, at the last, when he delivereth up the kingdom to Him, who is God and Father; when he shall have brought to naught every dominion, and every authority, and power—for he must reign until he shall have put all his enemies under his feet—as a final enemy, Death is brought to naught." For "He subjected all things under his feet. But when he (or, it, viz., the Scripture), saith that all things have been put in subjection to him, it is manifestly with the exception of Him who subjected to him all things. And when all things shall have been subjected, then will also the Son himself be subject to Him who subjected to him all things, that God may be all in all."

The passage which opens this vision upon the universe I have translated with some changes from the ordinary structure, affecting perhaps rather the rhetoric, than any material thought; binding it into one rounded and dignified sentence made up out of several unconnected and almost choppy sentences, and bringing the whole weighty period to converge its force upon the great truth of the resurrection.

In verse 24, which the common construction makes commence with *τὸ τέλος*, *the end*, as forming with *ἐρχόμενος*, understood, the reversed protasis of the conditional *ὅταν παραδῶ*, it seems to me much easier and more natural to give to *τὸ τέλος*, the familiar Greek adverbial construction at the end—*at last, finally*—then to make the *ὅταν παραδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν*, etc., the protasis of the conditional construction of which *ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος*, *as a final enemy Death is abolished,*

is the apodosis. And thus the grand and weighty truth which the apostle has been engaged, not exactly in proving, but in affirming and illustrating, is brought out with a fitting and most impressive close, as accompanying and crowning these other sublime events attending the Parousia. This stands, as it fittingly should stand, as the one consummating event and purpose of the Parousia, while the preceding sentence, which is strictly parenthetical becomes formally so, and leaves the final assertion of the great truth of the resurrection to sweep on to its triumph, and stated in its most triumphant manner, as the overthrow and destruction of Death. This having been accomplished, the apostle returns upon his steps, with verse 27, to illustrate the new truth of the victory and triumph of Christ which he had stated at verse 23, and to which he now proceeds to join that other hitherto unrevealed doctrine of the abdication by the Son of his transiently assumed vice-royalty, to God, who as absolute Deity becomes now sole and universal King, while the Son still as ruler over the special newly founded kingdom, becomes the Divine-human everlasting sovereign of the newly established and newly glorified kingdom.

I proceed now to the particulars of this wonderfully interesting passage.

Ver. 23. *Each one* (not, *every man:* ἕκαστος nearly=ἑκάτερος, *each of two*) divides, I think, the subjects of the resurrection into two classes: Christ and his people, the first-fruits and the harvest; and the harvest consists of "them that are Christ's," who are to be raised at his coming. This would seem to include the whole body of believers, and not, as must be the case if it refers to an assumed premillennial resurrection of the saints, to but a small part of them; for the number of the saints who should arise at the opening of that thousand

years could hardly equal, or nearly equal, the harvest of the righteous dead that, after a thousand years of the church's universal sway—and this all the more if the definite stands for an indefinitely larger period—would be gathered in the final resurrection. From the Apocalypse a correct exegesis rules out, I believe, a double literal resurrection, leaving a resurrection, twofold indeed, but twofold in character, and, analogously to the twofold deaths, a literal and a spiritual one. As the first and literal death is common to all and the second is reserved for the impenitently wicked, so—in reversed order—the first resurrection is spiritual and belongs only to the righteous, the final and literal resurrection is common to the race.[1] So the apostle knows but a single resurrection, and that at the Parousia, when the Lord shall descend with a mighty shout; when the peal of the *last trump* shall echo through the universe; when in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the living shall be changed and the dead be raised, and earth and sea, death and Hades, render up their victims to the judgment. If then, the Parousia is Christ's final coming—as the sequel of this chapter and 1 Thess. 4 : 13-17 show it to be—then *the end* (τὸ τέλος) cannot mark another section of the resurrection, widely separated in time from the first. It must mark, as the language plainly indicates, the next great event, viz., the Son's surrender of his delegated dominion; or, if it includes also the resurrection, it would be under its new category of a triumph over Death, and his destruction as the last of the hostile powers.

Ver. 24. *When he delivers up* (ὅταν παραδῶ) and *when he*

[1] The symbolical resurrection of Rev. 20 : 4 answers to that of John 5 : 25. The rest of the dead who do not share this triumph, have no first resurrection; they only share with the saints their literal resurrection at the final coming.

shall have brought to naught (καταργήσῃ) may be taken as co-ordinate, or the second as strictly subordinate to the first. In either case they determine as to (τὸ τέλος) *finally, at last*—declaring the one the great signal event, the abdication that shall constitute and mark it; the other the series of events that shall precede and condition it, the successive destruction of hostile forces, reaching its climax in the overthrow of death. Meyer strangely and causelessly places this overthrow of hostile powers in the intermediate time, which he assumes between the Parousia and the final resurrection. Nothing is more remote from the simple Pauline and Scripture doctrine. This putting down his enemies is the whole series of the Messianic victories from his taking his mediatorial seat. "Sit thou at my right hand" (Ps. 110); "Ask of me and I will give thee" (Ps. 2), declare his final making of his foes his footstool in the destruction of his last enemy. And this is to precede the resignation, as the resignation winds up and crowns all.

The *kingdom* (βασιλείαν) now surrendered is that which had been promised the Son in his incarnation (Matt. 28 : 18) and bestowed at his ascension (Ps. 2; 110 : 1), when God *conferred* (ἐχαρίσατο, Phil. 2 : 9) upon him the name (κύριος, *Lord*) that is above every name. This dominion, this vice-royalty, received for a specific purpose and a limited time he now surrenders to the Father, the absolute Deity by whom it was bestowed.

When he shall have brought to naught (καταργήσῃ), etc. This abolishment, following the investiture and completed in the resurrection, has been accomplished by the Son in his delegated dominion, and has formed the work of his entire administration. "Every dominion, authority, and power,"

forms a cumulative expression including pleonastically all the forms of hostility, whether of men or demons, organized or unorganized, that may array themselves against the Messiah's empire. Of course the terms are not used with any definite discrimination.

To follow out in detail the series of the Son's triumphs over his enemies belongs not to my present purpose. I suppose that one of these triumphs is found in each individual act of human redemption. In a general way they may be hinted at when our Lord sees in prophetic vision "Satan like lightning fall from heaven," and "as the prince of this world, cast out." So in the Apocalypse; the first restriction of his power is when he is cast down from heaven—his ejection from his dominion, perhaps, as god of this world—and descends in great wrath to the earth; the second, when he is cast out from earth, and hurled bound, by Michael the archangel, into the abyss; the third, and final, when with death and Hades, at the close of the resurrection, he is plunged into the burning lake.

Ver. 25. "*For he must reign* (*βασιλεύειν*) until he shall have put," etc. This verse declares categorically what the preceding verse implies, along with its Old Testament authority, the passages in Ps. 2 and 110, both of which declare what is the purpose and issue of his reign. Whether the *must* (*δεῖ, it behooves*) of this verse is the "must" of intrinsic or prophetic necessity, scarcely matters, as the prophetic necessity rests on intrinsic fitness. It is also indifferent that the subduing is in Ps. 110 attributed to the Father ("until I shall make," etc.), while here and in Ps. 2, it is attributed to the Son. The Son is exalted by the Father to his (all but) supreme dominion, that in his own person he

may overthrow his own and his Father's foes. Their intercommunity of action is too often declared to need illustration (John 5 : 22).

Ver. 26. "As a final enemy, death is brought to naught." This verse, borrowing its terms "enemy," and "brought to naught," states with final emphasis, the resurrection as the close of the series. Although it loses perhaps none of its essential significance by the parenthesis, yet the sentence loses its rhetorical, and largely also, its logical character.

Ver. 26. "As a last enemy," etc. Whatever its construction, the meaning of this sentence admits no doubt. It is the apostle's triumphant, and in this stage of the discussion, final assertion of the resurrection under the aspect of the destruction of Death, as the grand foe of the Messiah's kingdom. Many questions which this topic raises, it is not my province here to discuss.

Ver. 27. For "he subjected all things beneath his feet." This verse is not introduced, as held by Meyer, with the emphasis on *πάντα, all things*, in proof that the sovereignty of Christ extends over death. Rather the matter of the resurrection has been disposed of, as the close of his series of triumphs, and the writer now recurs, in *explanation of verse 25*, to that sovereignty itself, its origin, limitations, and close, as his direct theme; as conferred by God, and supreme over all except the personage who conferred it. For this he finds a fitting Old Testament illustration in Ps. 8 : 6, which he cites verbally (changing *thou* to *he*);—For thou didst subject all things beneath his feet;—in which the "all things" declares the extent of the authority, and the "thou didst subject," suggests its single limitation. The stream could not transcend its fountain. In the original passage, the being to

whom all things are subjected, is man. But Paul, like the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (2 : 5–9), finds in it a typical reference to the exalted Messiah as the representative of man. The subject is treated by the two writers with characteristic differences. The author of the Hebrews reasons it out after his own fashion. Paul takes it directly for granted, though doubtless his mind went through a like process of reasoning. With both, doubtless, the failure of actual humanity to realize the psalmist's ideal, occasions its transference to the Divine-human personage, the Son of Man, in whom it is fulfilled. Here of course the subject of ὑπέταξεν is God; while above, in verses 24 and 25, and below, in verse 28 (ὑποταγῇ), the subduing personage is Christ. Here the reference is to the ideal headship of the Messiah, his formal investiture with the sovereignty; in them, it is the actual subduing of his foes in the exercise of that sovereignty.

"But when he or it (viz: God or Scripture) saith (may say) that all things have been subjected to him." This I think a more natural construction than that of Meyer and others, "when he (viz. God) shall have said," etc. The former construction refers it to the preceding ὑπέταξεν, referring it to the investiture; the latter refers it to what God declares when the purpose of investiture is accomplished and all things are actually subdued. The one makes the πάντα ὑποτέτακται (*all things have been subjected*), merely a necessary variation on the form of the previous πάντα υπέταξεν; the other refers it, as in verse 28, to the actual subdual. Either meaning is admissible enough; but it is much more natural and easy to find it in the author's *reasoning* from the *import* of the expression, than the statement of an inference from the accomplished fact of subjugation. In this latter case, the ὅτω

εἴπῃ seems worse than idle. Why should Paul employ the awkward circumlocution, instead of saying "when all things shall have been subjected to him," to say "when God shall have said that all things have been subjected to him"? Besides, it seems less natural to refer to the close of the Son's reign the exception actually made at the commencement.

"It is manifestly with the exception of him who subjected to him all things." This, says the apostle, goes without saying. The Son's authority was, even during that period of practically supreme dominion, still in its ultimate character, delegated and subordinate. It was so from the nature of the case; from the very nature of the being in whom it was reposed. He was infinite, but he was finite; he was God, but he was man; he held in his nature an element essentially and ineradicably inferior to the divine. He was allied, intimately and forever, with the creature and the finite, and to such a being it was, in the nature of the case, unfitting that the supreme administration of the universe should be permanently entrusted. Authority must go back to its primal source, the eternal Father. In the very fact that it was the Father who put all things in subjection to him, is involved the idea of his subordination.

Ver. 28. "And when all things shall have been subjected to him, then shall the Son himself be subjected," etc. When the time and purpose of this vice-royalty, this delegated authority, shall be accomplished, this sceptre of apparently supreme dominion will be resigned. The subordination which before, in the Son's practically supreme rule over all creatures and destinies in the universe, had been latent, and as it were held in abeyance, shall become open and formal. The Son will formally and joyfully retire from the supreme sway which

had been accorded to him, and assume openly and lovingly the subordinate place which belongs to him as a subject—in a nature and relation voluntarily and irrevocably assumed—of the absolute and universal kingdom of the Father. But it is evident that the τὰ πάντα ὑποταγῇ (*all things shall have been subjected*) of verse 28 bears a different sense from the ὑπέταξεν and πάντα ὑποτέταχται (*all things have been subjected*) of verse 27. There, the subjection is the ideal subjection, the *authoritative* subjection, which inaugurates the Son's mediatorial reign; *here*, it is the practical subjection, the actual subjection, which closes it. Now all enemies have been subdued and brought to naught, including the gigantic and final enemy, Death.

But having thus abdicated his throne, into what does the Son retire? What relation does he henceforth sustain to the Father and the universe? Does his humanity disappear, and the theanthropic personage vanish from the scene, replaced, perchance, by the pre-existent Logos in his inscrutable and eternal relation to the Father? Of this the thought is not to be entertained for a moment. Deity allied himself with humanity forever; humanity, when it entered Deity, came to stay. Or, retaining his humanity, does the Son cease to reign, and sink into the level of the loftiest of mere subjects of the divine kingdom? Or, descending from his sole sovereign position, does he become a companion with his Father, in a sort of dual sovereignty, a half co-equal headship of the universe? Even this, I think, does not explain the scriptural position of the Son. He has ceased to be the universal mediatorial king; but he has not ceased to be a *king*. He has exchanged one form of sovereignty for another to which that was but a stepping-stone and preparation. The theanthropic nature was

assumed for a special purpose, but not for a limited time. The universal theanthropic dominion was conferred both for a specific purpose and a limited time. That specific purpose was the founding and rearing of a special kingdom—the Old and New Testament kingdom of God or "kingdom of heaven," an *imperium in imperio*, a kingdom at once spiritual and material, at once outward and inward, commencing in an inward spiritual regeneration, but culminating in a congenial outward glory; embraced in, and swept around by, that larger empire over which presides the supreme and infinite Jehovah; but constituting its core, its center, its brightest gem, and its richest ornament. This kingdom, originating in a stupendous plan of mercy and redemption, has drawn unto itself, as it were, the resources, and involved the destinies, of the universe. For this kingdom, the mediatorial kingdom was established; this kingdom, unlike that, is to be strictly and absolutely everlasting; and when that comes to an end amid the quaking earth, the opening graves, and a dissolving universe, this, springing from the ashes of all the kingdoms of the world, and triumphing over every foe that has plotted its destruction, shall just begin, in completed splendor, the march of eternity. This kingdom the Son of David came to earth and to the cross to found; this kingdom he reascended to God's right hand and to the throne of universal dominion to bring to consummation; and when the New Jerusalem, the capital of this kingdom, shall descend from God out of heaven to the regenerated earth, the Son shall descend to rule in it and over it forever. This is the kingdom typified in the Old Testament throne of the Son of David (2 Sam. 7 : 16: "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever"). It is the kingdom

of Luke 1 : 32, 33 : "The Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David : and he shall reign over the house of David forever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end"

I think it is no objection to this view of the kingship of the Son that in the symbolical New Jerusalem the "glory of God" is united with the light of the Lamb in making its illumination. In the Son's pre-incarnate existence the Son's being God does not prejudice his special character as the "Word" of God. In his mediatorial reign his throne is established at the right hand of God in the heavenly Zion (Ps. 110). So in the everlasting sovereignty over the church, that perfect harmony and essential oneness that have marked the whole previous revelation of Deity will still belong to the relations of the Father and the Son. United in creation, in providence, and in redemption, the undeniable though mysterious diversity in the triune nature shines forth in alternation with its essential unity. The only fitting, the only possible, relation for the incarnate Son to sustain in the peculiar and especial kingdom which he has founded in his humiliation, and has brought to triumph and perfection in his glorification, is that, in subordination to the supreme Sovereign, of its King and its Lord.

It may perhaps be interesting, in a brief recapitulation, to recall the various phases of the Son's existence and history in the light of the New Testament. He appears in two essentially distinct characters : the first, as the pre-incarnate Logos ; the second, as the theanthropic Son of Man. In the first, he is in no sense radically separable from the supreme Deity ; in some mysterious way one with, and distinct from, the Father ; the expression of Deity ; the Word through

which he spake; the light through which he shone; his organ of utterance and manifestation to the whole creation; the effulgence of the divine glory and the perfect impression of his substance. On the mysteries of this existence the Scripture does not dwell, and attempts to shed no light. It lies among the inscrutable secrets of the past.

The second, or *theanthropic nature*, discloses the Son's existence in three distinct stages: *first*, the stage of humiliation in which he assumed the form of a servant and became obedient even to the death of the cross. Below the angels, the messengers of the old covenant; below Moses, the human founder of the old covenant; below the humblest of God's ancient servants, appears He who is yet to emerge in a dignity and glory infinitely transcending them all, and from the disguise of whose utmost lowliness shine forth perpetual flashes of divinity. He sinks on the ship into a purely human slumber, yet awakes at the cry of his terrified disciples to still, by his word, storm and billow into calm. He sinks on the cross helpless into the arms of death, and yet even then opens heaven to the penitent robber dying by his side.

The *second* is that intermediate stage in which he appears after his ascension, appointed by the Father regent of the universe, "head over all things for the church"; highly exalted by a name which is above every name, and guiding the affairs of the universe, until the special kingdom that he had founded in humiliation shall be consummated in glory; but even in this apparently supreme dominion—supreme to all else—yet by virtue of the lower nature which he bears, still reigning in subordination to the one absolute Deity, though here the subordination is veiled in his glory, as on earth his

glory was hidden in his degradation. But when the purpose of the vice-sovereignty is fulfilled, and all enemies to him and his church are vanquished, he descends from his apparently supreme throne to that glad outward subordination to which his alliance with the creature forever destines him.

But in this *third* stage, still to reign; still to hold an *imperium in imperio;* in the bosom of the eternal Father, and under the administration of the absolute and universal King, still to hold the kingship of the church which he has redeemed, of the kingdom which he has founded, the anti-typal Son of David, in the anti-typal Jerusalem, on the re-generated earth. Nothing less than such a kingship can realize the declaration of God through the prophet to David, and through the announcing angel to Mary. Nothing less than this can answer to the language of the Apocalypse, where, in the New Jerusalem of the saints, the throne of the Lamb stands alongside the throne of God (Rev. 22 : 3—"the throne of God and of the Lamb"); "God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it; . . . the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21 : 22, 23). Thus in this consummated kingdom of God, the Father and the Son appear in the harmonious and united reign as in the Son's outwardly supreme mediatorial reign when he still has his seat at the right hand of God (Ps. 110). Throughout every step and stage of this wondrous revelation, Father and Son appear in the most absolute and perfect unity—always distinct and always one. And that Christ—the theanthropic —always joyfully subordinate—must always reign as formal king over the kingdom which the theanthropic Servant founded and the theanthropic Sovereign perfected, would follow from the nature of the case even if it were not matter

of express revelation. "The kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. 5 : 5), is the fitting designation of its joint sovereignty in their mutual relation. Here "Christ," in designating the formal relation, naturally stands first.

IV.

THE EXALTED NAME.

"Bestowed upon him the name which is above every name."

Philippians 2 : 9.

THERE are four names by which our Saviour is familiarly known in the New Testament. The first is the personal name Jesus (*Saviour*), which, by direction of the angel, was given to him at his birth. It was the token of his humiliation—the name which he took when he emerged from the bosom of the Virgin into that life of trial and suffering which ended in his foreseen death of agony and shame. This was not the name that God vouchsafed (ἐχαρίσατο) to him when he highly exalted him. It was given to him long before, and he bore it through his earthly wanderings, and brought it with him to his heavenly exaltation.

The second name is the name of Christ (χριστός, Anointed; Heb., Messiah). This was not properly a name; it was strictly an official designation, a figurative appellation, drawn from the Jewish usage of anointing, which set apart kings and priests to their official work. In his public life, after his baptism and the descent of the Spirit had set him apart to his work by a figurative anointing, he became in the estimation of his more enlightened disciples "the Anointed One," the Christ. It was only gradually and later that this became a proper name; sometimes simply *Christ;* more commonly, perhaps, united with his personal name in the compound *Jesus*

Christ. While he lived on earth "the Christ" was always a qualitative epithet: after his departure the single personal name that had marked his humiliation became much rarer, and the previously official designation *Christ*, or the compound Jesus Christ, became prevalent in the church.

A third name belongs to him in his relation to the Supreme Deity, as the Son of God. He habitually spoke of God as his Father—his own especial Father—and implying in himself a relation of peculiar sonship. To this name he always responded ("the Christ, the Son of the Living God"), though his favorite earthly designation of himself was the Son of Man: and it was gloriously confirmed to him when, in his resurrection and ascension, he was constituted "Son of God in power." The author of the Hebrews uses the name with great effect when, in illustrating his ineffable majesty, he declares that "he took his seat at the right hand of Majesty in the lofty heavens," becoming as much loftier than the angels as his name of *Son* transcended that of *Messenger*, which belonged to them. They were, like the winds and the lightnings, God's messengers; He, in a relation that knew no parallel, was God's Son.

But there is a fourth name which completes and crowns the series, and for which the names Jesus, Christ, Son, unite to prepare him. He could not have received it had he not earned it as Saviour (Jesus) and Anointed, and been adequate to its burdens and honors as Son. But now his earthly work accomplished, his divine nature fully vindicated, and his Father's glory fully displayed, he is prepared to carry his associated divinity and humanity to the throne of supreme dominion, and the honors of universal headship. He is prepared to exercise the functions and take the title of *Lord.* This is

clearly the title to which the apostle here has reference. This alone fits to the description, "the name which is above every name," a description which the *heart* of the believer applies indeed to "Jesus," but not in the sense here had in view by the apostle. The apostle's reference here is evidently objective, not subjective; it refers to a name intrinsically significant of pre-eminent exaltation, a name which God *bestowed, conferred* upon him (ἐχαρίσατο) as a mark of favor, and which accompanied his elevation. "Jesus" was the name of his lowliness; was given, not conferred; marked service, not rank; was brought with him to his heavenly throne, not received there. I emphasize the use of the verb *bestowed, conferred,* which is not appropriate to the name "Jesus." The two-fold meaning of the word "name" in the passage under consideration, may here deceive the reader. It means first, as often, "title" ("bestowed upon him the name"); secondly, strictly "name"—"the name of Jesus." Exchange in the first "name" for "title," and the obscurity would disappear.

All these point to the name "Lord" except the position of the name "Jesus." But to a closer observation this bears the same testimony. He who had borne this name on earth is to be vindicated in heaven, and for this *the* name (not *a* name) which transcends every other is conferred upon him, that every tongue in heaven, earth, and hades may acknowledge his *Lordship.* The apostle skillfully prepares the way for this climax of his thought. When he wrote "the name that is above every name" he had the name "Lord" in *mind;* but with that rhetorical skill which marks his always weighty and never artificial style, he postpones its utterance till he can precipitate upon it, so to speak, the accumulated force of the whole powerful sentence. The word "Lord" be-

comes the apex of an inverted pyramid, defining and concentrating the swelling thought which is held back till it bursts its boundaries of expression. Let the reader read thoughtfully the sentence as a whole, and doubt, if he can, that the name "Lord" was that which God conferred upon Jesus when he highly exalted him.

V.

THE MILLENNIUM OF THE APOCALYPSE.

Revelation 20: 4–6.

THE doctrine of the premillennial advent of Christ, with an accompanying resurrection of the righteous dead, and a millennial reign on earth of the glorified saints, has, from early Christian times, agitated the church. To the immediate successors of the apostles, indeed, it seems to have been unknown. But a little later, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and after them Tertullian, Cyprian, and others following perhaps the lead of Papias held it, sometimes almost as a test of orthodoxy. Yet it never succeeded in incorporating itself into the formal creeds and Confessions of the church, and after its short blooming period (from about A. D. 150 to 250), it became almost universally discredited, and bore in the general estimation a strong taint of heresy and enthusiasm. From the age of Augustine, for more than a thousand years, it had no living hold on Christian belief. Our own day has partially revived it, and though generally rejected by the practical sense of the church, yet, while scholars like De Wette and Düsterdieck, Ellicott and Alford, and some eminent Christian preachers maintain it, it can scarcely be lightly dismissed as an exploded heresy. Certainly the last word regarding it has not yet been spoken, and perhaps will not be until the millennial dawn shall shed a clearer light on the mysterious book which is alleged to contain it.

I shall attempt no complete discussion of this many-branching subject. Waiving the numberless side issues involved in the controversy, I shall confine my attention chiefly to the passage. The first question is: What light, apart from other Scriptures and from its intrinsic tendencies, does this peculiarly apocalyptic doctrine receive from the Apocalypse itself? Any, even slight aid to the elucidation of this point will, I am sure, not be unwelcome.

The point which I would first emphasize is the importance of interpreting our passage in harmony with the general character of the book; and for this we must bear distinctly in mind what that character is. The Apocalypse, whatever historical or prophetical elements may underlie it, is not in *form* a historical, nor even strictly a prophetical book. It is throughout, pictorial and symbolical. Not only is the physical eye of the seer shut, but the normal action of his intellect is suspended. He is translated into an ideal realm, a realm which, if he were not under spiritual guidance, would be perilously exposed to the sorceries of the imagination. From the rising of the curtain at ch. 4 (and the preceding chapters—certainly the first—are scarcely an exception) we are led, under the magic wand of the heavenly mystagogue, as through a series of "dissolving views" which present in pure symbolism the great crises of the church's history. The August Personage who meets us on the threshold, the door opened in heaven, and the magnificent panorama that greets the vision of the seer, the throne, with its majestic occupant, the glassy sea, the encompassing elders and living ones, the seven-sealed book of destiny opened by the Lamb, the trumpets and vials with their amazing succession of portents, the dragon, the wild beast, the false prophet, the sun-clothed

and star-crowned woman, the mystical Sodom, the mystical Babylon, the New Jerusalem—this slight and cursory glance will remind us how completely symbolical is its entire structure, and how thoroughly this principle of symbolism must pervade its entire interpretation. No matter how distinct and emphatic are the utterances to whose literal construing we are challenged, the same emphatic distinctness marks the portions which, taken literally, would present the merest monstrosities. We must remember that the presumption here is always *against* a literal interpretation. To find an event recorded on the pages of the Apocalypse is sufficient to assure us that while it shadows forth some great truth it is of no actual occurrence. To comprehend its import we must translate it out of its apocalyptic symbolism. Thus the apocalyptic numbers are generally mystical, and the technical millennium can scarcely denote a literal thousand years. It must be either a mystical number, or, more probably, a round number standing for an indefinite but greatly extended period.

And so, taking the collective scene portrayed in our passage: It shows us the martyrs coming to life, occupying thrones, and reigning with Christ during the thousand years of Satan's imprisonment. This astounding scene can scarcely be regarded otherwise than as symbolical. It is confined to this single passage, and it stands here imbedded in symbols. The white-steeded rider and the angel standing in the sun (of ch. 19), the imprisoned and loosed dragon, with his rousing of the nations, and hurling them madly and disastrously against the encampment of the saints, all are marked by purely symbolical features, shadowing forth mighty realities, but in which none would dream of tracing literal events.

The passage which they thus environed must, by every law of consistency, be in like manner symbolical. It is an ideal picture, not a record of actual facts. And, if this is so, it matters not whether we take the "living" of a bodily resurrection, or in one of the figurative senses which it so readily admits. Whatever meaning we put upon the words, the passage, *as a whole,* is symbol. It cannot be construed into teaching a literal, personal return of Christ at the beginning of the millennial period, a literal premillennial resurrection of the saints, and reigning during this period with their Lord. This is too violent a breaking in upon the ideal character of the record; it is too manifest a joining—like the poet-critic's human head and horse's body ending in a fish's tail—of exegetical incongruities. It is islanding in cloud-land a solid piece of *terra firma.* Not to insist, moreover, that nothing is said in our passage, or near it, of Christ's coming to earth, or reigning upon the earth at this period, this vision of the triumphant and reigning martyrs with the reigning Christ, is not, even in the symbol, an earthly scene; and if it were, its symbolical character would forbid our taking it as matter of pure history or prophecy.

But, taken as symbolical, what is the import of the symbolism? What signify the coming to life and reigning of these martyrs, and why do we meet with them just here? To answer these questions, we must turn back to an earlier stage in the action of the book. These martyred heroes do not now meet us for the first time. We have seen them before, and, if I am not mistaken, their earlier appearance goes far to explain their present reappearance; and the two together will shed no unimportant light upon the general scheme and structure of the Apocalypse. The connection of the two

scenes has been, indeed, frequently observed, but I doubt if its full force has been recognized, and this mainly from a failure to see the full significance of the earlier scene. May I ask the reader to turn back to the passage in ch. 6, and to read afresh the entire chapter which opens the formal action of the Apocalypse? I shall beg his indulgence if the intrinsic interest of the subject leads me to dwell upon the earlier imagery to an extent somewhat beyond the exigencies of my argument.

I will barely remind him of the magnificent *mise-en-scène* of ch. 4, which gives us the central stage and starting point of the apocalyptic drama. Ch. 5 prepares further the action by showing at the right of the throne, the fateful volume written within and without to mark its pregnant fullness, and sealed with the seven-fold seal of perfect mystery; and by revealing the intense interest that awaits its disclosures, and the rapture that is felt when the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," transformed by the divine magic into the sacrificed "Lamb," prepares to open the seals of the scroll, and unfold the series of events which his redemptive sacrifice has procured him the right, and his heavenly exaltation has given him the authority, to disclose, and of which his supreme headship of the world gives him absolute control. The hosannas that burst from the heavenly ranks over distant earth and sea, show the profound importance of the impending disclosures. And the sublime character and stately movement of these two introductory chapters fittingly prelude a drama whose scope and *dénouement* involve the supreme destinies of the church and the world. Nothing in apocalyptic literature can be nobler, nothing diviner, than these fourth and fifth chapters. Here surely is no maddening shrine from which are to pro-

ceed the ravings of the pythoness; no Sibyl's cave whence will be scattered on the winds her frantic babblings. These slow, significant, stately images betoken the ordering of God and the tread of destiny.

With the sixth chapter, the action fairly commences. It not only gives us the first instalment of the contents of the book; but by opening six out of the seven seals, it conducts us in a general way, down to the very verge of the final consummation. And the opening of the seals at once reminds us how, in this "Revelation of Jesus Christ," the one name appears supreme "above every name"; the one personage towers above every other. He who in the first vision, stands the august ruler and guardian of the church; who in the second vision takes into his hand, as sovereign arbiter, the book of destiny; now, at the head of the third, rides into the lists of war, the marshaller of its hosts and the disposer of its issues. The opening of the first seal brings forward a rider on a white horse, his hand armed with a bow, his head wreathed with a crown, going forth "conquering and to conquer." There can be no reasonable doubt as to the identity of this personage. Every interpretation but *one* is idle and impertinent. War, Victory, Science, Evangelical Preaching, Trajan, Caligula—all seem almost wanton deviations from the straight path of interpretation. It can be none but Christ, the Lord of the church and the world—whose work has originated and whose power shall control these grand phenomena—who steps first on the majestic stage, with the symbols of power indeed, but which mark rather the stage of conflict than of achieved victory. In accordance with this, there follow in his train three deadly ministers of strife—hostile forces, whose appearance is ominous of the dire judgments that are to follow. It is no

placid and smiling scene upon which the curtain rises. The conquering hero is indeed there, giving the assurance of final triumph; but war, famine, and pestilence, death in his direst forms, are to have for a while their awful way.

But now why are these formidable powers thus marshalled? What brings upon the stage the Warrior Prince of Salvation, and in his train these dreadful ministers of death? The next vision tells the story. The opening of the fifth seal shows us in symbol the conflict that is raging between the kingdoms of light and darkness, of which our earth is the theatre, and in which the church has hitherto been, and is yet for a season to be, the oppressed and afflicted party. At the foot of the heavenly altar are seen the souls of those who have been slaughtered for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus, whose fidelity to the truth has brought on them the combined rage of earth and hell, and the avenging of whose wrongs has set in motion those elements of conflict and woe symbolized in the preceding figures. These martyrs represent no individual persons. They are not the suffering saints of any particular age, the victims of any special persecution; they represent the oppressed and persecuted church, the object of the world's and hell's hostility, whose sufferings have set in motion this pageant of war, and whose impatient cry, "How long, Lord," etc., with the answering injunction that they curb their impatience till the ranks of their brethren shall be completed, is really the watchcry of the coming conflict; is virtually the key of the entire book; pointing to the scenes of blood and terror that are to follow, but—as alike the character of the leading rider and the white robes given to the martyrs indicate—assuring the triumph in which all is to issue. The cry of the martyrs for God's avenging judgments wraps up, so to speak,

all the dire scenes of convulsion and wrath that lie between ch. 6 and 19 ; and the response to that cry, in word and symbolic action, points to the peace and glory which, following these lurid horrors, fill the closing chapters of the Apocalypse. I need scarcely remark that the cry of these martyred souls for vengeance is not intended as the utterance of the Christian heart under persecution or wrong, and needs as such no explanation or defense. It simply embodies the principle of justice which, living in the human conscience, determines God's dealings with the world, and of which his judgments on the wicked are the natural expression. Here, at the head of the process of retribution, appear the victims whose wrongs demand it. Their words are the impersonated cry of those wrongs, and their place right here, just after the glimpse given us of the dire agencies that are to work, and in advance of the whole body of destructive scenes, is most appropriate and significant. It could not be anywhere else in the book with any similar propriety. Most fittingly appear at the outset successively the Lord of the church, who is to battle for her cause ; the three personages that best represent the agencies of wrath and terror that are to be brought into action ; and finally the church herself, represented in her agony by her martyred children, and to vindicate whose wrongs, and achieve her triumph, the whole pictorial drama is brought upon the stage. The drama thus foreshadowed, of blood and vengeance, sweeps on in varying forms and episodes to the eighteenth chapter, which brings its *dénouement* in the downfall of the mystical Babylon. The curtain then rises on an altered scene—on the reappearance of the now triumphant Rider with the white horse, and the reappearance of the now vindicated martyrs standing for the now triumphant church.

The stress of the action, then, lies between the sixth and nineteenth chapters. These comprise the events which must transpire before the prayer of the martyred saints is fulfilled. On the details, or even on the special plan and scope of these intervening chapters, it is not my province to dwell. We can scarcely doubt that they involve two grand epochs in the fortunes of the church: the overthrow of anti-Christian Judaism—the spiritual Sodom where "the Lord was crucified"; and of anti-Christian Paganism, the mystical Babylon, the shock of whose downfall reaches the extremities of the earth. The eighteenth chapter closes the record of this decisive and awful catastrophe—the final vengeance wreaked on her in whom "was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered upon the earth," the power whose gigantic iniquity had absorbed into itself all the crimes and hostilities of the earth.

The great drama, then, has now substantially reached its close. The scenes of strife and woe shadowed forth in the first four seals are ended, and the hour for fulfilling the prayer of the downtrodden and martyr church has come. The nineteenth chapter opens this period with a pæan over the just recorded catastrophe. Then the Rider on the white horse of ch. 6, at that time armed for battle and going forth to war, now with widely contrasted costume and train, reappears. On his head many diadems; his raiment dyed in blood; his name the Word of God; from his mouth (as in ch. 1) a sharp sword issuing; on his vesture and thigh the title "King of kings and Lord of lords," and his following the heavenly armies on white horses, the symbols of victory. An angel, standing in the sun, summons the birds of heaven to banquet on the flesh of the overthrown enemies of God,

while the wild beast and the false prophet are consigned, with their worshipers, to the lake of fire. Then descends a mighty angel who seizes the Dragon, the arch-enemy, the leader of the hosts of evil, and hurls him, bound, into the abyss where for a thousand years he shall cease to lead astray the nations. And finally, as the white-steeded warring Rider of ch. 6, with his dark following, has reappeared with the insignia and retinue of triumph, so, to complete and crown the picture, the martyred saints of this chapter, there humbled, agonized, impatient over deferred vengeance, now reappear, raised from their humiliation to thrones of sovereignty, and sharing during the thousand happy years the glory of their Master. No longer the cry of "How long, O Lord, wilt thou not avenge our blood?" rings in our ears. The promised hour has come, and judgment has been given to them on their once haughty oppressors.[1]

Can there be any reasonable doubt who these souls are, and what the significance of the entire picture? Do not the white-steeded Rider, with his similarly mounted train, the imprisoning of Satan, the exaltation of the outraged and martyred sons of the church, form a striking parallel and antithesis to the warring Rider with his sombre following, and the groaning victims of earth's and hell's violence in ch. 6? The one gives the opening of the great drama which runs through the following chapters, the other its triumphant close. The one

[1] The interpretation here given would determine the proper subject of ἐκάθισαν, *they sat upon them;* i. e., persons sat upon them, the indefinite subject being determined by the connection, as is not infrequent in Greek. Were this properly a judgment scene the occupants of the thrones might be the apostles, according to Heinrich. Otherwise we might, with De Wette, Düsterdieck and others, think of the four-and-twenty elders. But, as it is, the natural subject of the verb is the martyrs, and the judgment given to them is probably the avenging judgment on their old persecutors.

brings on the stage the precursors and dire omens of war, and in the bleeding and agonized church, its motive and occasion; the other in the diademed and triumphant king, in the overthrown hosts of darkness and their dungeoned monarch, and, finally, in the vindicated and enthroned martyrs, its triumphant and glorious issue. The one picture explains the other. In the former the prostrated and groaning martyrs symbolize the church groaning under her tyrannous foes; in the other the enthroned martyrs represent the church disenthralled and triumphant. And most significantly and beautifully at the head of the one picture appears the great Arbiter of the conflict amid the blazonry of war; at the head of the other reappears the same wondrous Rider, a diademed and declared victor. The chapters 6, 19, and 20, are mutually interpretative and interpenetrative, and are largely the key to the Revelation. They interlock and interlace each other across the separating centuries. They shed their prospective and retrospective light over the tumultuous and stormy scenes that lie between.[1]

If this is a just view of the passage, it bars out any thought

[1] If we rightly explain this martyr scene then its significance is by no means that which is very commonly assigned to it. Its purpose is not to show that the martyr spirit is to prevail during the millennial period. It has no such merely *incidental* object as that, but one much more vital to the action of the book. The triumphant Rider, the imprisoned Dragon, the enthroned martyrs, form a triad of symbols marking the triumph of the church, and the third is scarcely the least expressive. That the martyr spirit will characterize the millennium we cannot doubt; but that does not seem to be here indicated. And how appropriate a symbol of a triumphant church would be, especially to early Christians, this vision of reigning martyrs, we need not urge. Its founder was crucified; its twelve great co-founders were murdered like their Master; its pathway through the early ages was deluged with blood. and to be baptized into Christian discipleship was virtually to be "baptized for the dead"—into fellowship with death and the communion of its victims. Surely no better symbol of a victorious, triumphant church could be presented to the early centuries than such a vision of enthroned martyrs.

here of a literal resurrection, of a personal return of Christ to the earth, and of any literal millennial reign on the earth of the risen saints. There certainly is here no hint of a literal coming, or of *any* coming of Christ to the earth. His appearance in chapter 19, glorious as it is, is as purely symbolical and ideal as the corresponding appearance in chapter 6. The majestic figure, with its glorious train, sweeps in both scenes across the seer's field of vision, and nothing can justify our transforming it into a literal or even a symbolical return to the earth. Just so there is no literal resurrection and reign of the martyrs. Their appearance in chapter 7 is symbolical of the wrongs and distress of the persecuted church, and their reappearance here, of the accomplishment of their prayer for vengeance, and thus of the exaltation and triumph of the church which they represent. The literal church which they represent is indeed upon the earth; but the symbolical scenes, alike of the afflicted and of the glorified martyrs, are in heaven or in that undefined region in which the apocalyptic visions naturally move.[1]

Nor certainly does the term "living" or "coming to life" of the martyrs force us to the idea of a literal resurrection. The words "live" and "life" are exceedingly elastic, and admit the most various figurative uses. The sinner converted to righteousness, lives; moral, spiritual excellence is life.

[1] We are certainly not required by the passage, chapter 5:10—"They shall reign upon or over the earth"—to understand this appearance of Christ (chapter 19), and of the martyrs (chapter 20), as a reigning upon the earth. The martyr scene itself is not located upon the earth; the triumphing church, which the reigning martyrs symbolize, will indeed be triumphing upon the earth. But the proper reign of the saints will follow the consummated kingdom of Christ; and this will follow both the millennium and the judgment, and will take place when the New Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom of Christ, shall come down from God out of heaven.

The wretched man become happy, the unfortunate become prosperous, the obscure and degraded raised to dignity and wealth, *live*. These various uses of the word abound in all literature, and are to no writer more familiar than to the Apostle John. When in John 6, "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall *live*," the reference is clearly to spiritual life. When in the next verse they "that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to a resurrection of life," the "life" is used figuratively for blessedness. Most naturally then does the writer designate this elevation of the martyrs to triumph and sovereignity as a living, a coming to life, and then by a natural association with the event in which we shake off the bondage and degradation of the tomb, as a resurrection. No figure can be more natural than this. These terms, life, resurrection, are the terms by which we naturally designate such a revolution in condition and destiny. And in antithesis to the literal resurrection of which all are to be partakers, this becomes, in the mind of the writer, a "first resurrection" a type, or rather an anti-type, of the material and literal rising which awaits all. This "first resurrection" is the prerogative of the martyred dead—of course in their character as representatives of the church triumphant. The rest of the dead have no "first resurrection." They live not again until the thousand years are finished. They have only the literal coming to life of the final and proper resurrection. Hence they receive not the benediction, "blessed and holy," of those who have part in the first resurrection, and no promise of going unharmed of the second death. The dead who share this moral rising with Christ, who are now uplifted and honored with him, will in the literal resurrection awake

to everlasting life. The dead who have not this typical rising will, in the literal and proper resurrection which awaits them, awake to spiritual and everlasting death—the second death. Thus the two resurrections are the antitheses and correlatives of the two deaths. The first death is literal and universal; the second death is figurative and restricted. So the first resurrection is figurative and partial; the second resurrection, the final and for the wicked the only resurrection, is literal and universal. We are spared the tame and superficial division—at once unimaginative and unscientific—which cuts the two resurrections mechanically by time into two portions, the one earlier, the other later, instead of dividing them potentially into the higher and the lower, the spiritual and the literal. "The rest of the dead," the author means to say, have no first resurrection; they have only the material and literal one;[1] and there can be no objection to the mind's playing between the kindred ideas of literal and moral living, of a literal and spiritual resurrection, any more than between the ideas of a literal and spiritual death.

[1] A different explanation of this language, "the rest of the dead," etc., is preferred by some, and thus a different solution of the difficulty involved in explaining one of the resurrections figuratively and the other literally. They interpret the second resurrection, equally with the first, figuratively. They find it in that brief assertion of their ascendency by the powers of evil which takes place at the close of the millennium. As the saints lived and prospered during the thousand years, so at their close the ungodly have their short and illusory triumph. This is their period of living and reigning—reigning perchance with their master, the devil, and thus their first resurrection. This explanation is plausible; yet it seems to me to lower the dignity involved in the weighty words, "Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the 'first resurrection,'" in which I cannot but feel that the writer recognizes an intrinsic quality in the "first resurrection" that exempts its subjects from the second death, and fits them to become kings and priests unto God. I think, indeed, that the writer here extends his idea beyond the mere figurative "living"—the exaltation and triumphs of verse 4, to that "hearing of the voice of the Son of God," which has preceded this exaltation, and is, in the highest sense, the "first resurrection."

But the sequel of this martyr scene refutes, perhaps, still more decisively the doctrine of the literal double resurrection. When the thousand years are finished, Satan is let loose, and again goes forth to deceive the nations. There is to be one last and desperate onset of the powers of darkness on the realm of light. They band themselves together against the encampment of the saints until fire from heaven destroys them. All this, however figurative, proves that the earthly life, both of the world and the church, has continued through these millennial years. For the conception of the church having existed on the earth in its spiritualized and glorified state, encircled by or mingled with, a vast alien body of unbelieving and idolatrous nations, who finally, in some mysterious manner, muster their forces against the glorified sons of the resurrection, is too monstrous for a moment's harboring. The inconsistencies of Milton's war of the angels furnish no approach to it. There spirits are embattled against spirits, and the introduction of "rocks, waters, woods," and of the hellish artillery of earth, are the simple play of the poet's imagination over a scene which can only in this way be brought within the compass of his song. But in grave, and inspired, and *literal* narrative, a combination of nations in the flesh raising war against the glorified children of light is too monstrous to be thought of. Taking the record then, in its necessary significance, we learn that the tide of human life has flowed on during these millennial years just as before. The church victorious, peaceful, triumphant, has held everywhere substantial sway, and has brought largely to the population of the earth, both in number and quality, the fruits of righteousness. Mark the effect of this on the relation of the two resurrections. Even giving to the thousand years' period

its utmost restriction, the believers of this long period must, it should seem, far outnumber those of all preceding ages. One continuous reign of righteousness for a thousand years will swell the children of righteousness into countless myriads; and if, as seems to me nearly certain, this thousand years stands for an indefinite but greatly prolonged period, the first resurrection, even if it embrace all the then righteous dead, will reap but a handful compared with those who shall swell the sacred harvest of the final resurrection. And if only the martyrs shall be thus signally honored, the first resurrection will be, beside the later and universal one, almost like that of the few saints who thrilled into life beneath the sympathetic throb of the crucifixion when even the Lord's death attested his life-giving power.

If there *were* any such exceptional and premillennial resurrection, it might be, one should suppose, something like this—a sort of inkling of the good things to come—a first-fruits, marking some great crisis in the church's history, of the coming harvest of life—a mere advance guard to the myriad hosts of light, who, when the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend from heaven with a mighty shout, shall spring at the call into light and glory, and, sweeping around their Lord enthroned in mid-heaven, shall fill the concave of the skies with the shining sons of immortality. *That* will be *the* resurrection, and so far as any evidence appears, the *only* future resurrection; marking the moment when time shall be lost in the eternal ages, and Satan and his finally subjugated hosts shall no longer dream of even a temporary triumph over the kingdom of the Son of God.

Whatever difficulties then may be found in such passages as "the resurrection from the dead," to which the apostle

aspires (Phil. 3 : 2), we must look for their solution elsewhere than to this "living" of the saints in ch. 20. For, taking it never so literally, it does not divide the two resurrections distinctively into those of righteous and wicked. It confines the first resurrection, indeed, to the righteous, but it reserves immensely the larger number of these to the second and final one. The first can, of necessity, include only those who were dead at the opening of the millennium, while the myriad believers of the millennial era are reserved for the second.[1] And this is confirmed by the account of the judgment in ch. 20. Here all the dead, small and great, stand before God; earth, sea, and hades have given up their respective dead; the books are opened, including the Book of Life, and the distinctions of character and destiny are then determined according to the disclosures of the Book of Life. All this becomes utterly unintelligible, if, more than a thousand years before, the righteous dead have been raised, and sealed, and glorified, leaving only the enemies of God for this final rising and judgment. What a mockery to speak of the books being then opened, and the Book of Life opened to determine their destiny, and *as many* as are not found written in the Book of Life being thrown into the lake of fire! Why, according to the double resurrection theory, *none* are now found registered in this Book of Life! All shall be thrown into the lake of fire! The discriminating judgment was past more than a thousand years ago, and since that epoch, nothing has occurred to change the destinies of a single member of the race! And if that first was a real, literal resurrection of the be-

[1] Unless, indeed, as some have maintained, the millennial era is one long continuous resurrection period, in which every new-born or newly dying saint is immediately and gloriously transfigured, a fancy which, as it has no hint in its favor in the text, does not need a word of refutation.

lievers, how limited, apparently, the circle from which it was drawn! *Now*, for this final day of doom, earth and sea, death and hades render up their dead. Are there no righteous in all their precincts? Or rather does not the universality of the language, as well as the final opening of the books—the Book of Life among and above the others—indicate that this is indeed a universal, as well as a final, gathering of the race?

The apparent distinction of the two resurrections then, in one or two passages of the New Testament, has been, I think, rightly referred to a distinction not of time, but of character. The "better resurrection" of Heb. 11 : 35, is the resurrection of a better destiny, a resurrection to life rather than to judgment. And so with Paul, the "resurrection *from* the dead" which he coveted, may be the resurrection which separates him from the children of death, though occurring at the same time with theirs. Nor is it unlikely that, though belonging to the same epoch, the two classes may be slightly separated even in time. The one may spring forward in eager response to the celestial summons; the other may lag behind with a fruitless longing for the shelter of the rocks and mountains. In all this, I am aware how utterly our human conceptions must fail to comprehend the resurrection. Yet, in reasoning upon it, I do not see how we can disregard the imagery of the Bible.[1]

[1] I beg to add a word or two on the side issues of the question for those who find our view unduly delaying the second coming. They will remember that delay is no unwonted feature in the kingdom of God, and that the Apostle Peter makes very large provision for it; that the early Christians would have been utterly incredulous at a hint that the lapse of nearly two thousand years would leave the Lord's coming apparently as remote as ever; that our view gives the larger scope for testing the power of the gospel and for honoring that Spirit who was promised as the all-sufficient guide of the church, and whose presence was to more than compensate the personal absence of the Lord; that it is in time a difference

In discussing the subject, I have made no attempt at completeness. My essay has confined itself almost wholly to the Apocalypse, and in this I leave unmentioned the innumerable shades of premillennarian opinion and conjecture. And if I have dwelt at seemingly undue length on those features of the book which I have had occasion to consider, it has not been without a purpose. My hope has been, in bringing into connection with certain earlier and later chapters, to shed a little light for some of my readers on the structure of the book itself. I have wished to remind them how chapters 4 and 5 prepare for the coming drama; how chapter 6 opens the action, wrapping up in itself a prophecy of all that is to follow, and from chapter 19 to the close, the *dénouement* of the action, the prophecy's last stages of fulfillment. With this, a not inconsiderable portion of the book becomes measurably clear. Looking at the twelve intermediate chapters, the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth, difficult in some of their details, are clear in their general purport, unfolding that judgment on Rome, the representative of the secular persecuting power, which culminates in chapter 18, and brings indirectly the final triumph. The eight chapters then, between the sixth and fifteenth, remain as containing most of the, as yet, unloosed knots of this mysterious book. In these, also, some of the chapters are not especially difficult; and their general scope, as pointing to the overthrow of persecuting Judaism, is generally conceded. With, then, so much of the Revelation clear in plan, and not undecipherable in its symbolism; with so much over which purpose and

of at most only a few thousand years; that what is promised is certain, and that which is certain is always near; and that when, beyond the millennium and all the earthly triumphs of the church, the Lord shall come, he will come in unimagined glory, and will come *to stay*.

method have evidently presided, it seems not unreasonable to hope that a satisfactory light will yet break upon the rest; that one by one the enigmas will be solved; and a significance will be found pervading the whole book worthy of the unquestioned grandeur of some of its parts. Coleridge somewhere says that he will not assume to understand a writer's ignorance, so long as he remains ignorant of his understanding. In a reversed method, though somewhat analogous spirit, we may refrain from sitting in judgment on the refractory enigmas of the Apocalypse, while so much in it challenges our admiration at once for its clearness and sublimity. Its three opening chapters come surely from no unanointed pen. The two next ones, so luminous and so sublime, can be ushering us into no Babel of unintelligible discords. And the four closing ones, following those scenes of lurid wrath and confusion with a solemn calm, as if "Jerusalem the Golden" had brought down into the bosom of earth's distractions the very glories of the skies, cannot be issuing out of an unordered and undirected chaos. The sublime significance of the part guarantees a like significance of the rest, as deeper human researches, or the breath of Providence, shall pierce or lift the veil. Socrates, in returning a volume of Heraclitus, the philosopher,—known in antiquity as "the obscure"—being asked his opinion of it, replied: "What I understand is excellent, and I think also what I do not understand. But the book requires an expert navigator." So the intelligent student of the Apocalypse can scarcely fail of the conviction that where so much bears clearly the divine impress, the rest will prove itself of corresponding quality. In character and position, the book is wonderfully unique. Bearing the name of the favored apostle, who twice

received the Lord's intimation that he should in life be witness to the glory of the second coming; sustained in this claim of authorship by nearly uniform early testimony; and having such striking Johannean traits, that the skeptical, but acute Baur called the fourth Gospel "a spiritualized Apocalypse," it closes with marvelous grandeur and dignity the inspired canon. At its head stands in majestic symbolism the Lord of the church, uttering to her his words of admonition, of approval, and of promise; its progress exhibits, amid the thunders of physical and moral convulsion, the heavenly kingdom advancing to its consummation; its close winds up the long and stirring conflict with the glorious triumph of the church, and a Sabbath peace falling on the distracted world. And then comes down out of heaven the New Jerusalem, gathering within her wall, glories undreamed of by the fondest visions that clustered around the earthly city of David, and, with her river and tree of life, transforming the paradise of Eden into the paradise of God. If all this is the dream of an enthusiast, or the fabrication of an impostor, then surely never, before or since, has enthusiasm dreamed with so divine a method, or imposture counterfeited so cunningly the genuine signature of inspiration.

VI.

THE RENDERING OF "ΓΡΑΦΗ."

2 Tim. 3 : 16.

THE INDEPENDENT, of recent date, contained an article, discussing the construction of this passage, rendered in the Common Version: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc.; but which the Revised Verson gives: "Every Scripture inspired of God, is also profitable," etc. The difference is very considerable. The one rendering simply declares that whatever writing is divinely inspired is profitable for Christian training and discipline without indorsing the claims of any particular writings. The other—that of our received version—declares this and much more. It indicates *what* the specific writings are that receive this high eulogium. It gives the apostle's formal testimony to the divine origin of the collective body of the Old Testament Scriptures, and their consequent usefulness and efficiency for Christian discipline. The latter, certainly, has the loftier and wider scope; and as the aged Paul's assertion at the close of his career, and as it were *in articulo mortis*, of the divinity and transcendent value of the Old Testament Scriptures as a solemn confession of faith to his beloved Timothy, and through him to the church of all times, it has an interest far transcending that of the rendering of the Revisers. Yet this latter rendering is by no means restricted to the Revision. It is endorsed by Alford, Ellicott, Huther, and other eminent scholars, though not without marginal and

other indications of doubt of its correctness. The case, then, stands *sub judice*, though perhaps with the argument leaning in our modern scholarship to the side of the Revisers. It may interest us then to inquire how the evidence really stands; whether it gravitates violently toward either side, or is so evenly balanced as to furnish no satisfactory ground of decision.

The author of the afore-mentioned article makes an essay toward a settling of the question. In examining the writings of the apostle he finds so large a number of "pairs of adjectives" united by the copula, analogously to the construction of one passage as to form a sort of habit of style, which justifies a conclusion favorable to that construction; and from this he argues for the received rendering. The argument is interesting; but it has the drawback that the examples adduced belong really to such familiar usages of the Greek language, and could not go far to prove a construction which on any other ground is open to objection. Among the passages cited there is scarcely one that could really suggest a doubt, or in which a different construction would even be deemed possible, or certainly at all probable.

Suppose we turn to another element in the passage, the use of the word "Scripture" (*γραφή*) in the New Testament writings, and on whose meaning here the question largely hinges. According to the one rendering, *γραφή* has here the general meaning of "writing"—our "Scripture" in its secular sense—and is determined to a sacred meaning only by the epithet "inspired of God" (*θεόπνευστος*) attributively attached to it—"every Scripture which is inspired of God"—"every divinely inspired Scripture." According to the other, the substantive (*γραφή*) carries *in itself* its sacred meaning; the

idea of divinity and inspiration inheres in it; and the epithet θεόπνευστος (*inspired of God*), is added predicatively simply to explicate and emphasize, for a special purpose, the quality already contained in it.

Which now of these two senses has the sanction of New Testament and Pauline usage? This it should seem ought to count in settling the meaning here. The word γραφή, whether in its singular or plural form, is used fifty-one times in the New Testament—fourteen times by Paul. In all of these, *without a single exception*,—unless the present passage be one,—the word has the sacred and not the secular signification. In every instance it refers specifically to the Jewish Scriptures as an inspired and divinely authoritative writing. So uniform is this usage that we may assume that in the one or two instances in which the epithet "holy" or "sacred" (ἱερά) is added (as Rom. 1 : 2), it is appended merely for emphasis, and not to fix an otherwise uncertain or general meaning. "As the Scripture saith," "not knowing the Scriptures," "according to the Scriptures"; such are the terms of unquestionable import that stud the pages of the New Testament.

This overwhelming current of usage should be decisive of our passage, and decisive for the received rendering unless some very strong objection can be urged against it. No such objection has been, nor, I think, can be urged against it. In the preceding verse, indeed, γράμματα (*writings*), is used in a general sense and specialized by the adjective; but the fact that the apostle changes the noun in the next verse, argues for a change of meaning.

Nor can an inference unfavorable to our rendering be drawn from the omission of the article, by which "all Script-

ure" becomes or may become "every Scripture." If this is the better rendering, it simply makes the Scripture to be conceived not as a collective totality, but in its individual elements; but none the less is the reference to the whole Scripture; and passages like Gal. 3 : 8; 4 : 3; 2 Peter 1 : 20, abundantly justify our rendering here "all Scripture." That such is the proper rendering I have little doubt, nor can I conceive that any *grammatical* objection can be brought against the received rendering. There is no reason why the "inspired of God" (*θεόπνευστος*) should be connected with Scripture (*γραφή*) attributively rather than predicatively, and the sentence both in Greek and English is more smooth and flowing.

On the whole, this seems to me a case in which "Revision" has not revised wisely; in which it has given a meaning to the passage in no way required by its grammatical construction; in which it has given to the leading noun (*γραφή*) a meaning contrary to the otherwise absolutely exceptionless usage of the New Testament, and which restricts it to the narrower statement of the disciplinary value of *whatever may be* an inspired utterance of God, instead of leaving it on that commanding eminence on which it stands as the aged apostle's final and formal testimony to the divine authority of that collective body of Old Testament Scripture in whose faith the apostle lived, and which was to be the church's heritage for all time.

VII.

THE SELF-EVIDENCING CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE.

IT was not, it may be presumed, after spending some hours in the diligent perusal of Plato, or of Cicero, that the Roman prince exclaimed, "I have lost a day!" It was far more probably after a day spent in ministering to the frenzied brutality of the populace in the games of the circus and the amphitheatre. From the reading of the great masters of wisdom and virtue, he would feel that he had drawn nourishment for his spiritual nature, matter for profitable reflection, and strength and aid for the culture and practice of those virtues which he, although a heathen, doubtless felt to be the crowning excellence of man. How much more, then, should the Christian feel that he is profitably and appropriately engaged, when evolving with all care and diligence the treasures of heavenly wisdom contained in the word of God, and laying up in his soul these riches of his spiritual inheritance! It is by the truths of the divine word that he is to expand and strengthen his intellect; it is these which he is to convert into principles, that are to form the substratum and basis of his character; that are to purify his heart and regulate his conduct.

There is no book like the Bible. He will say so with the deepest emphasis who has penetrated most deeply into its hidden stores of wisdom, and who has availed himself the most

largely and thoroughly of its teachings, for all his spiritual exigencies. To him it comes with ever-increasing freshness, and ever-augmenting glory. From brief but pregnant passages are ever flashing forth new gleams of brightness. From some unnoticed corner are ever welling up new founts of inspiration. The Bible commends itself to our reason as worthy of a God—the only book that has ever appeared on earth, which could for a moment make good its pretensions to be divine. Dr. Chalmers, in his argument for the divine origin of Christianity—written, we believe, while he yet knew little of experimental religion,—sets aside the internal argument, on the ground that we are incompetent to decide in advance what the word of God ought to be, and that to pretend to sit in judgment on this point is presumption. He therefore confines himself to the external argument, some of whose points he urges with characteristic fullness and power. But in so judging, Dr. Chalmers' proceeding is manifestly erroneous. He in fact surrenders to the enemy the very stronghold of the Christian evidence. He overlooks the higher and nobler portions of human nature; he forgets that if man is endowed with reason by which to judge the validity of the outward evidences of Christianity, he is none the less endowed with a spiritual sense, which takes cognizance of its internal and moral character. Each of these faculties is absolute and supreme in its own department; and if they are not co-equal and co-ordinate, most assuredly the moral element does not take rank below the purely rational. It is hence just as impossible for us to receive as divine a book which outrages our moral convictions, as one which our intelligence declares to be unsustained by outward testimony. The argument from the internal character of revelation is, scientifically considered,

just as legitimate as that from its historical and outward attestations, and immeasurably higher and more decisive in its character—just so much higher as man's moral nature, by universal consent, transcends his intellectual.

Here, in fact, is the strong point of the Christian evidence. On this foundation we might rest the weight of an all-sufficient argument for the inspiration of the Scriptures. We might say to the infidel geologist, "Prove, if you will and can, that the earth has had an existence millions of ages beyond the date fixed by the Mosaic records"; to the infidel ethnologist: "Prove, if you can, that the Scripture account of the origin of the human race from a single pair is a mistake"; to the infidel philologist: "Prove, if you are able, that this or that passage on which we rely in proof of some cardinal doctrine, is interpolated and spurious." We are not careful to answer you in this matter. You yourselves will anticipate and render unnecessary our attempts at refutation. God has made you with a conscience—with a capacity to perceive the morally good and beautiful and true, and subjected your reason to the power of this faculty. He has made it a part of the indestructible essence of the soul. Prove, then, that the Bible is, historically and scientifically considered, a blunder or a falsehood, and you create the most absolutely unsolvable problem in the universe. You array the purely rational against the still higher moral elements of your nature, in a hostility that knows no terms of adjustment. You present the monstrous anomaly of a vast scheme of doctrine so out of harmony with the outlying world of mind and matter, that the understanding cannot receive it, and yet internally so absolutely excellent, so marvelously coherent, so transcendently glorious, that the conscience cannot reject it. We take the Bible in the naked simplicity

and power of its spiritual teachings, in the majesty of the God whom it reveals, in the purity and coherency of the morality it inculcates, and we press it home to your reason. We lay it on your conscience. We summon a response from the deepest and holiest sanctuary of your being to its claims to divinity. We defy you to disbelieve it. You cannot do it until you can deny yourselves, and eliminate and rend away from your spiritual being the conscience which is its crowning glory. The utterance of your moral nature is far more quick, direct, and decisive, than that of your purely intellectual. It will speak with a clearness and an authority that will reduce the complicated and doubtful conclusions of science to a nullity. You may be an infidel in heart, you may be an infidel in your reasonings; but in your conscience and your reason you cannot be. These nobler elements of your being, faithful to the God who implanted them within you, the sleepless guardians of his sanctuary in the human bosom, will speak within you, and compel you in some honest moments to acknowledge your faith in the Bible and its God.

But the Bible is to be studied. It is a difficult book; simple and clear enough, indeed, in its great outline of spiritual truth, but obscure and difficult in many of its details. It consists of the productions of a long series of writers, scattered through a long series of ages, and of the utmost diversity of personal character, culture, and condition. It deals in local incidents and allusions, and with usages and customs widely different from our own. From the nature of the case, it demands study, and study with all the helps for the elucidation of obscure points in archæology, history, and language, which can be procured. It will also repay study; and frequently a close inquiry will evolve results illustrating some obscure

passage in a manner equally surprising and beautiful. Especially should the Bible be studied by comparison with itself. Itself should be made, as far as possible, its own commentator. Even with the most imperfect translation, they who in prayerful reliance on Divine aid, thus diligently explore its passages, and bring the light of one fact to shine upon another, will often have occasion for gratitude and delight at their progress in spiritual knowledge.

Let me take a simple case illustrating my meaning. The student of Scripture has before him the beautiful passage of the 23d Psalm, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," etc., and he naturally inquires after its precise meaning. Does "the valley of the shadow of death" here denote death itself, as often, perhaps, commonly understood, or does it not? Looking at the context, he observes that he is conducted through the valley by the rod and staff of the shepherd, images which would not perhaps naturally apply to the state of dying. But he looks elsewhere—Job 28: 3, "The stones of darkness, and the shadow of death." Likewise 34: 22, "There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." Isaiah 9: 2 (quoted by Matt. 4: 16), "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." The inquirer would perhaps need examine no farther to satisfy him that the "shadow of death" was in Hebrew idiom simply a strong and emphatic expression for darkness, like our *death-shade*. In Job, man searches out "the stones of darkness and the shadow of death," *i. e.*, the precious stones concealed in the deepest darkness—amid darkness and death-shade. "There is no darkness nor shadow

of death," *i. e.*, there is no darkness nor death-shade—no darkness deep as the shades of death, or the night of the tomb, in which the workers, etc. In Isaiah, "they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death," is simply an emphatic parallel of "the people that walked in darkness." Having thus settled the meaning of the "shadow of death," we have no difficulty in applying it to the case before us. The imagery is appropriate and beautiful. The Lord is my shepherd. He leadeth me into green pastures, and beside still waters. Yea, though I pass through valleys overhung with deepest darkness and death-shade—the heaviest night of affliction and sorrow —his rod and staff will guide, etc. This is a simple case, but the principle is of indefinite application.

I have said that the *internal* argument for the truth and divinity of the Scriptures is legitimate and incontestible; that it appeals as directly and convincingly to our moral faculties, to our higher reason, as does the external, or historical argument to our lower understanding. Hence the only effects of discrediting the outward fences or supports of revelation, is to array one part of our nature irreconcilably against another, and to create a problem as obstinately unsolvable, as if we had before us a figure which mathematical calculation proved to be *round*, and mechanical measurement proved to be *square*. But we leave this ground, and descend to a lower level. We throw out of the account the internal evidence of the Bible—the claims based on its transcendent spirituality and excellence—and in the historical argument we place the skeptic in a like dilemma as before. We affirm that here, no evidence, incidental or collateral, can be raised *against* the Bible, so strong as that which its history establishes in its favor. Assume that you

have demonstrated the Mosaic account of creation to be a myth; that from the opened sepulchres of Egypt and the exhumed cities of Mesopotamia, a voice has issued falsifying the Old Testament history; that, finally, the miraculous history of Jesus Christ is a congeries of fables. Your work is done. The venerable structure of revelation is demolished, and lies before us a shapeless and melancholy ruin. But no, your work is *not* done; you have another problem to solve, more stubborn than any that has yet tasked your faculties; a problem all the more difficult in proportion to the completeness of your solution of the other. This mass of falsehood and fable—the lying forgeries of knavery or fanaticism—you have got to explain how it is that it has filled so large a place in the world's history, and acted with so mighty an influence on the world's destiny. From the days of Jesus Christ to the present, literature and history have been filled with his name. Kings have owned allegiance to it; nations have been swayed by it; philosophers, statesmen, divines have rendered it their homage. As his advent becomes the central point of the world's chronology, so also of the world's political and moral history. The grand political and moral questions of each age have hinged upon the New Testament writings. The discourses of the Saviour have been the text, on which the great body of literature has been directly or indirectly a commentary.

It is in vain to point us to systems of polytheism, ancient or modern, or to Mohammedanism, as presenting parallel features. Greek and Roman polytheism presents but *one* point analogous to Christianity, and that is simply the power of the religious principle over the human mind. But its strength lay in popular superstition, and by the philosopher

and the reflecting, its huge masses of fable were regarded with contempt. Modern polytheism enslaves and crushes its victims, and is looked upon by universal Christendom with contempt or pity. Mohammedanism, since its first fiery impulses were exhausted, has proved itself impotent to deal with the nobler elements of our nature. The mind of Islam has withered beneath its sway, and there is scarcely an intelligent writer in Christendom who would waste three pages in either proving or disproving its claims. Not so with the Bible. It has furnished the battle-cry to the intellectual and moral heroes of the world. It has been in the thick of the fight—itself the mightiest champion of all—where questions were agitated which stirred the deepest heart of humanity. It has linked itself with all the great problems of social reform and philosophical speculation, and lifted them into an importance which else they never could have claimed. Gigantic systems of organized corruption have reared themselves upon it, and sought to crush it. Subtle and elaborate theories of speculative error have twined themselves about it, and sought to throttle it. But from one and the other, like Milton's angels throwing off the weight of superincumbent mountains, it has worked itself free, and reappeared with undimmed purity and undecayed vigor. It has come up on the rising tide, it has swept onward with the swelling wave of the world's civilization. Nay, itself has demonstrably been the deepest well-head, and furnished the most powerful momentum of that stream. It has proved its capacity to bear the shock of the collision of the mightiest forces of humanity; to live where great principles are discussed; to stand where the foundations of States and systems are being settled or upheaved. Like the war-horse exulting in the thunder of the battle, so

the Bible is in its element amid the loftiest demonstrations of intellect, and the sternest strifes of intellectual and moral warfare.

Recall our position. We are not *arguing* for the truth of Christianity. We are not even demonstrating its probable future triumph from its past history. We are simply presenting it as a *power* in the world which the skeptic has to account for. We present *the actual influence of the Bible on the history of the race,* as a problem for solution by the man who fancies that he has scientific or other grounds for rejecting it. A stream, it is said, does not rise higher than its fountain. At all events, we look for some sort of proportion between a phenomenon and its cause. Shadows do not overturn empires. Phantoms do not wrestle with and overmatch brawny-armed and mail-clad heroes. When we see the deeds of a Hercules, we take it for granted that a Hercules is somewhere at the bottom of them. When the words "*Mene Tekel,*" trace in flaming and fearful characters a monarch's doom on his palace wall, we know that back of the hand that writes there is an intelligence and a will. The traveler in Europe meets here and there a class of remains of antiquity which makes upon him a powerful and gradually deepening impression. Now in Britain, he meets the solid masonry of a Roman wall. Now in the heart of Paris, he sees structures which remind him of the days when this gorgeous capital was a humble appanage of Rome. In Southern France, he stumbles perpetually on temples, amphitheatres, and aqueducts, which tell him how splendid must have been the empire of which this was but a remote and subordinate province. He traverses roads which were constructed for the march of Roman armies. He looks upon baths which ministered to the

luxury of Roman prætors. And thus he goes on, step by step, building up in his imagination the colossal fabric of Roman power; reconstructing with the sorcery of moral comparative anatomy, these scattered bones of empire into one colossal, gigantic, terrible form, whose legs bestrode the world, and whose iron arm dashed into pieces every obstacle to its progress. With unutterable awe he approaches the banks of the Tiber, where was the source of all this power; where *she* sat enthroned on her seven hills whose nod made the world tremble, and whose legions bore her dominion to the banks of the Thames, the Danube, the Euphrates, and the Nile. And now, suppose any one should start up and tell you that not only Romulus and Remus, but Rome itself was a *myth!* There was no central power for all these remote and mighty effects! There was, indeed, a place called Rome, but only an inconsiderable village which her partial inhabitants fabled and lied into greatness! Absolutely, the statement would not be so absurd as that which, in view of what the Bible has *done*, denies the indwelling power, and of course the divinity, of its origin. A stream rolling a resistless volume over the world, with no fountain! The most stupendous effects, and no cause! A set of spurious documents, originated by knaves and transmitted by dupes, taking possession of the intelligence of mankind: fostering it, advancing it, and advancing with it, to universal intellectual and moral supremacy! Assuredly, this is a miracle greater than all the miracles of the Bible; for it is a miracle without a God to work it. And that the Bible is so advancing, is patent to observation. It is neither sinking exhausted by its previous achievements, nor discredited by the growing intelligence of the age. Germany is returning slowly from its

dark and disastrous course of rampant unbelief. The scoffing atheism of a past age is silent and abashed even in infidel France. And in England and America, the great centers of intellectual and moral light, the Bible reigns with a constantly increasing sway.

We, of course, have no apprehension that the disclosures of science will contradict revelation. We only say that it is a question to the Christian faith wholly unimportant. The Bible has established itself. He who should prove its inconsistency with historical records or scientific teachings, would only create the dilemma which we have suggested. He would only be proving that nature contradicts herself. Like the atheist who hangs the universe upon nothing, so he would be showing that the most stupendous phenomena in history are without a cause. In the great battle of the world, a Knight has appeared, clad in impenetrable armor, and wielding resistless weapons. His mightiest adversaries have been unhorsed; the sturdiest lances have been shivered in the collision; hosts have recoiled before him; and wherever he has moved, his form has been a tower of strength to his friends, and a terror to his foes. But at length his helmet is taken off, his corselet of steel is removed, and where should have been a body and a will to deal those stalwart blows, and to perform those feats of martial prowess, there is—*nothing!*

The Bible is one of the easiest, and one of the most difficult of books—at once among the plainest, and the most obscure. The faith of the child can grasp its general spirit, and its most essential teachings; the intellect of the man and the erudition of the scholar, can scarcely explain its special difficulties, or resolve its profounder problems. We remem-

ber to have heard it said—in apparent depreciation of the scholastic study of the Scripture—that God had expended the resources of Omnipotence upon the endeavor to simplify his word, and make it level to the universal understanding. We cannot think so. We are sure that the study of the poets and prophets of the Old Testament—that the following of the impetuous and irregular argumentation of Paul—that a comparison even of the simple records of the evangelists —that a survey, in short, of the thousand verbal obscurities and remote historical and antiquarian allusions scattered over the Sacred Volume—will satisfy any one that it was not the purpose of the author of revelation to release those to whom it is addressed from the most diligent study of its pages. Regarded in all its details the Bible is an exceedingly difficult volume. Few books in the whole compass of human literature present so many hard and knotty points to be resolved, so many stern problems to grapple with, as the Scriptures.

It is common to attribute the obscurities of the Bible to the nature of its subject matter—the mysterious and incomprehensible character of the truths with which it deals. This view, has of course a degree of justness. If the world of sense teems with inexplicable mysteries; if the mechanism of a flower or a leaf utterly transcends our comprehension; if a survey of our physical frames compels the exclamation, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" if the volume of nature is all over-written with inscrutable wonders, what must be expected of that volume whose high argument is God and eternity, and all the grand system of spiritual truth?

Yet this, after all, but partially explains the matter. The

Bible contains numberless difficulties which stand in no necessary relation to the nature of its subject matter; difficulties growing entirely out of the method which God has seen fit to adopt for communicating his truth. This method baffles all the preconceived notions of human wisdom. Had man had the ordering of the matter, he would have had the truths of God sent down from heaven authenticated by God's immediate signature, and drawn out in a series of simple, transparent, unmistakable propositions. They should have come, as the Jews required their Messiah to come, with all the outward showing and majesty of the indwelling divinity. They should have come in a form which would have placed them at the utmost possible remove from every natural product of the human mind. The Bible should have stood in complete and grand isolation from every form of merely human literature, blazing with the glory of the manifest Godhead, and flashing at once and resistlessly upon the soul, all its transcendently important truths.

Not such was the wisdom of God. He has adopted a widely different mode of making his revelation. He has imbedded its truths in the current forms of human literature. He has let them come out as the apparently casual product of circumstances. Their utterance connects itself with the incidents, ordinary and extraordinary, of individual and national life. Thus the divine element blends itself with an element essentially and thoroughly human. History, poetry, rhetoric, argumentation, all alternately become the vehicles of the Divine communications, with all the obscurities and difficulties incident to these different forms of composition. And religious truth thus depositing itself in the works of numerous authors, written amid the successive changes of centuries, and

each separate production mirroring the peculiar character of the time—the whole could not but present matter of laborious and protracted study, for clearing up the obscure, and harmonizing the apparently discordant.

But are these difficulties without a manifest object? Can we not see good reasons why God should not make the Scripture as plain and simple as human reason would have demanded? Its difficulties of style, its boundless varieties of allusion, its wealth of incidental matter not absolutely essential to the single purpose of a revelation, all impart to it a genuine human interest, and give scope to the exercise of those high powers with which God has endowed us. Nothing has been formed in vain, and much less the sublime aspirations and matchless capacities of the human soul. Over against these capacities, God has set a boundless universe, everywhere admitting, inviting, and rewarding research. Suppose the facts of geology, of botany, of astronomy, had all been given us classified and arranged, instead of being imbedded in the earth, enshrined in the flowers, and scattered in confused and seemingly contradictory phenomena over the universe of stars, for the mind to search out, harmonize, classify and gradually build up into a glorious system—from what a world of pleasurable activity would the mind have been excluded! So had divine truth come to us naked, insulated, classified, forcing itself resistlessly upon our perception and belief, instead of being picturesquely scattered over the wide surface of human history, and arrayed in an external garb of human incident and emotion—what a rich field of legitimate activity would have been closed to the mind! In the physical world, the search for knowledge is, if possible, even more pleasurable than the knowledge itself. How reasonable to

suppose that the same principle would apply to the moral as to the physical creation—to God's revelation in his word, as well as to his revelation in his works! In interpreting its obscure phraseology, in tracing out its recondite allusions, in reconciling its seeming contradictions, in marking the ten thousand points at which the Scripture narrative intersects the lines of human history, and finally, in evolving its whole half-hidden truth, until the mind looks at last upon a system radiant with glory, and replete with essential harmony—in all this how natural, how worthy an employment for the sublime faculties of the human soul! How reasonable that he who has everywhere else made effort the condition of possession and of pleasure, should have made it so here! That intense and exciting labor should not be made the condition of our mastery over the stores of earthly science, without being, at least in an equal degree, essential to our acquisition of heavenly wisdom! And who that has advanced a little in the study of the Scriptures, who has begun to see light penetrating its dark places, order emerging from what at first seemed chaos, and the scattered facts and truths gradually linking themselves together, and shedding reciprocal light upon each other, does not find it in his heart to bless God even for the difficulties of revelation—for giving him this sharpener of the appetite for spiritual truth? Would he wish to devote the energies requisite for accumulating perishable wealth, and yet will he not wish to task his utmost powers in gathering and appropriating the riches of heaven? Does he regard that as a gracious provision which makes earnest and assiduous toil the parent of all true possession and enjoyment in temporal things, and yet would he have this principle dispensed with in spiritual things? All the analogies of nature, all the en-

dowments of the human soul, then, would lead us to expect that God would give the same scope for its powers in grasping the truths which reach upward to the loftiest heights, and outward to the remotest circles of truth, as to the apprehension, at least, of the lower orders of phenomena. And finally, we may add that in the widening circles of science, in the successive and once unanticipated revelations which the realm of the universe may open, revelation will share, and itself disclose heights and depths of mystery and glory, that will put to shame our loftiest conceptions both of the already attained, and of that still to be disclosed.

VIII.

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MESSAGE TO CHRIST.

"ART thou he that cometh, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11 : 3.) "And blessed is he whosoever shall not be stumbled in me" (ver. 6). "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (ver. 11).

The eleventh of Matthew is signalized by a very remarkable deputation from John, the Lord's great forerunner, to the Saviour, with a very remarkable question, and followed by some extraordinary utterances on the part of him to whom the question was addressed. The question seems an abrupt and unlooked-for inquiry as to the character and claims of the Lord. It was followed by a brief reference to the Lord's works as demonstrative of his claims, by a rebuke of the unbelief implied in his question; by a subsequent high eulogium pronounced upon the Baptist; and a declaration that with all his superiority to the ancient heroes of the faith, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

There first naturally attracts our notice in this series of noteworthy utterances, the declaration of John's relative inferiority to the humblest members of the kingdom of heaven. To the thorough student of the New Testament, any explanation of its import may seem scarcely needed; yet where such men as Chrysostom, Augustine, and Luther have erred, followed by many of lesser name, it cannot be superfluous to set

forth clearly its import. And in fact it has seemed to many almost a paradox that he who in one breath is represented as superior to all the eminent saints and seers of earlier time, should in the next be placed below the humblest in the kingdom of heaven. The eminent writers named have endeavored to solve the difficulty by referring "the least in the kingdom of heaven" to Christ himself. This interpretation makes, at first view, a plausible sense, but it is fraught with insuperable difficulties, and wholly overlooks the real scope of the passage. Both the self-disparagement and the self-exaltation of the language, as applied to Christ, are equally out of place.

The true explanation turns not upon the personal character of John, as contrasted with that of any other person or persons, but upon his position and office. It places in contrast those who preceded, and those who were *in* "the kingdom of heaven." "Verily I say unto you," said the Saviour, "that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them." They lived in the age of types and shadows—in the time of promise, not in that of fulfillment. They saw the promised blessings afar off in dim vision; John saw them near at hand. The flashes of the coming glory broke upon his view; the east was streaked with the growing premonitions of the coming day. But John too had not "attained." He only enjoyed a Pisgah view of the promised kingdom which it was not his privilege to enter. Thus, while greater than all his prophetic predecessors, both in the clearer light which he enjoyed, and in being not merely a prophet, but the messenger, the forerunner of Christ, he was still below those who should enjoy the full light and privileges of the established kingdom. The kingdom of

heaven was at hand, was come near—but had not actually *come*. John was close upon its boundary, but was not yet *in* it. He opened its portal; he pointed and urged others into it; but died himself amid the shadows of the elder dispensation.

The difficulty of the passage, then, is dispelled by an exact understanding of the New Testament meaning of the "kingdom of heaven." It is not heaven as the seat of God's glorious presence, and the abode of beatified spirits. It is not even God's spiritual kingdom, as set up in the hearts of all true believers. It was the outward organized kingdom, instituted at the coming of our Lord; the new, far more spiritual economy which then took the place of the old. This kingdom commenced in its germ with the Saviour's entrance on his official work as Messiah; but it was not formally and fully inaugurated until the descent of the Spirit at the Pentecost, when his gracious influences distilled like dew upon his people, and it was no longer a future Deliverer, a coming Messiah that was vaguely promised, but the incarnate, crucified, risen Jesus who was preached, with redemption in his name. On the transcendent superiority of this newly organized kingdom of God, I need not now dwell, nor upon the elevation enjoyed by the humblest of its members above the most favored of patriarchs and prophets, now that the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom was fully understood, that the Holy Spirit was shed forth in ample measure, revealing to his people the things of Jesus, and enlightening them into that mystery which so swelled the bosom of Paul—the mystery hidden for ages—that the partition wall between Jew and Gentile had been thrown down, and the Gentiles were fellow-heirs to the unsearchable riches of Christ. There were then three dis-

tinctly marked and progressive stages: (1) That of the ancient prophets and holy men, who, in their more darkened age, had been distinguished favorites of heaven; (2) John, who had been selected as the immediate harbinger of Christ, and stood in dignity, light, and privilege above all his predecessors, being not without some intimations of the spiritual character of Christ's work, and his own time falling, in a certain sense, within the more favored period; and (3) those who were permitted to enter into the kingdom of heaven—to witness and share in its complete establishment, and in all the glorious privileges which it brought with it. John stood in the transition period—fully equal, probably superior, to the most favored of his predecessors, but nevertheless below even the humblest of those who were permitted to witness the fulfillment of the promises in the glorious establishment of the kingdom of God.

But if John was not strictly *in* the kingdom of heaven, the new dispensation, what shall we say of his baptism? Was it Christian baptism? and if not, did the apostles sit down to the communion table with their Master, without having submitted to Christian baptism? The answer to the question is in a nutshell. John's baptism was not formally, and in the fullest sense, Christian baptism—but it was that essentially. It was like the mission of John himself, preparatory and transitional. It looked forward rather than backward. It was a baptism of repentance with reference to the coming Messiah, rather than of faith in the crucified and risen Jesus. It contained the core, but not the full development of the Christian ordinance. And finally it was a divine ordinance—instituted of God. As such, the apostles had beyond a question, like their divine Master, all submitted

to it. They had been baptized with a baptism which was essentially, if not in full development, the ordinance required by Christ; with a baptism divinely instituted; with the best baptism, and the only baptism that then existed—and all who can claim for themselves thus much have, I think, a divine warrant to share the ordinances of the Christian Church.

But we have still to answer the question, "What led to this deputation of John to Christ?" All the other statements of the New Testament indicate John's unbounded confidence in Jesus as the Messiah, and unquestioning reverence for him. He had shrunk reverently from baptizing him, as the inferior shrink from the superior; he had seen the heavens open to inaugurate and attest his mission as the Son of God. The question was that remarkable one: "Art thou he that cometh, or do we look for another?"

He had pointed him out as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and expressed his joy in him as the Principal to whom he was but an accessory. And yet, seemingly in the teeth of all this, we have here an abrupt and startling inquiry whether he was in truth the Messiah. The phenomenon is extraordinary, and justifies earnest endeavors for an explanation.

The solutions proposed are two: one, that the question was proposed to meet doubts which had risen in the mind of John; the other, to satisfy John's disciples—to assure them, by bringing them into personal contact with the words and works of Christ, of his divine mission. This latter theory is plausible, but not convincing. John might, indeed, have sent his disciples to listen to the discourses and behold the works of Jesus, but he would scarcely have authorized them

to address to him an inquiry so blunt, and so seemingly disrespectful. And again, the disciples put their question directly in the name of their master,—"John the Baptist hath sent us to ask thee" (Luke)—and to John is the reply most explicitly and pointedly directed—"Go and tell John again." In short, everything about the transaction points to John as the person mainly interested, and the supposition that it was for the disciples, is improbable and gratuitous.

But how are we to explain the question as coming from John? I answer: it sprang from his misconception of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom. All Israelites expected, upon the coming of the Messiah, the setting up of an immediate, glorious, temporal kingdom. Even the most spiritual had their views alloyed by a large intermixture of secular conceptions. They looked for the immediate breaking of the Roman yoke, the redemption of the temporal Israel, and a restoration of more than the glorious days of David and Solomon. The peace, the prosperity, the splendor which Isaiah had so glowingly depicted, were then to be the inheritance of the nation. Partly, certainly, in this light, we are to interpret the exultant songs of Mary and Zechariah; the eager gladness with which the multitudes thronged to John's preparatory baptism; the anxiety of Herod to dispatch the destined supplanter of his throne; the enthusiastic hosannas of Jerusalem when Jesus made his public entry into it. The disciples surely did not fall behind even the religious Jews of their age, in the spirituality of their conceptions of his reign. Yet their disputes as to who should be the greater, pointed to a temporal kingdom, and the question, "Lord, wilt thou now restore the kingdom to Israel?"—put to him on the way to the Mount of Ascension—shows that even the startling phenomena of

his death and resurrection had not been able to dislodge the deep-rooted prejudice. Can we doubt, then, that John shared the prevalent misconception of his countrymen? That when he came declaring that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, he had a like expectation of an immediate, glorious, outward empire?

Are we pointed in reply to the spiritual declarations of the harbinger in the fourth Gospel, such as, "Behold the Lamb of God," etc.? To this I answer, that John was a prophet, the last prophet of the old dispensation. As such we might expect from him prophetic utterances, and that too, clear in proportion to his more favored position and the nearness of the fulfillment. But we need not suppose any deviation in his case from the ordinary law of Old Testament prophecy. He did not himself fully understand the import of his own predictions. The temporary ecstasy is to be distinguished from his ordinary and normal state, and the views expressed in the one are no criterion of his prevailing conceptions in the other. One of the greatest trials with which our Saviour had to contend to the last in his disciples, was their grovelling and unworthy ideas of his work and kingdom. Was John exalted so entirely above them?

We are not left, I think, to mere inference. The point is decided by the express testimony of the Saviour. He pronounces in the hearing of the multitude an exalted eulogium upon John, declaring that as a prophet, and more than a prophet, as his own harbinger, he stood fully on a level with the most eminent of the earlier saints. Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, none of these could take rank above John. And yet, adds the Saviour, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. This is no personal derogation from the

character of John. It shows the difference of the *dispensations* —the measureless superiority of the new and spiritual over the old and more secular economy. I assert what is scarcely open to valid questioning, that the kingdom of heaven means here the new dispensation which Christ was about to set up, and that his language is simply equivalent to saying that the humblest subject of it stood in knowledge and privilege above the highest of the old. An admirable commentary on the passage is Christ's language to his disciples: "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that ye hear, and have not heard them."

Our Saviour's authoritative declaration then, declares the inferiority of John. It puts him among the prophets of the past dispensation, the last and greatest of them, indeed, but still of them, dwelling amid their shadows, and not emancipated from that element of earthliness which attended the clearest revelations of the old economy. This too is our Lord's explanation of the conduct of John, and apology for it. He had sent to Christ because he did not understand the nature of his kingdom—its thorough spirituality. Hence he was vexed with his delay, with his lingering in obscurity, with his contenting himself with performing miracles among the peasantry of Galilee instead of seating himself on the throne of David, and arraying himself with the glories of an earthly potentate. He was, in fact, *stumbled*, offended in Christ. And he sent the deputation to remind him how tardy and improper was his procedure, how he was failing to meet the expectations which greeted the destined Monarch and Redeemer of Israel. The question was not one of innocent ignorance seeking infor-

mation, but of prejudice, misconception, and presumption, which demanded a rebuke.

And the Lord rebuked him. In language delicate, dignified, and severe, he referred John to the works of beneficence and mercy which he was performing, and then adds gently, yet severely, "and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." John had been offended in Christ, and in sending this deputation he had shown how the weakness of the man and the prejudice of the Jew blended itself with the majesty of the prophet and the forerunner.

Let me beg the reader now to look at the whole carefully in connection, and especially to put the passages containing the question and answer alongside that containing our Lord's comment on John's position. They explain each other. The question from John shows what suggested the declaration of his inferiority, and this declaration again is a commentary upon the question. And as they harmonize with each other, so they harmonize with the usual tenor of the New Testament passages.

Let me add two reflections. First, this mission, thus interpreted, adds John to the list of Scripture worthies, whose failings, as well as their virtues, inspiration has faithfully revealed. Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, all appear with their faults more or less grave. Peter, in the next breath after receiving an emphatic blessing for his sublime confession of faith, is rebuked with severity for his failure to understand the true work of the Messiah. And so here the faithful pen of inspiration has, with its usual apparent unconsciousness, placed the record of one blot on the otherwise stainless escutcheon of the Baptist.

Secondly, my subject reminds us of the cause of that viru-

lence and malignity of hate which accompanied the Jewish rejection of the Messiah. There was with them not merely the working of ordinary human depravity, but the overthrow of their long and proudly cherished national hopes. That glorious kingdom which had been their dream of ages—whose coming glory gilded the pages of prophets, and swelled into rapture the songs of their bards, was it come to this? This man of Nazareth, this son of a carpenter, whose retinue was the halt, the blind, the illiterate, was it in *him* that all those sublime predictions of the future deliverer found their realization? Hence the infuriated rage with which they dragged him to the cross, and loaded with execrations and with all the ignominy which outraged national pride could heap upon him, the impostor who declared that he was the long-looked-for Hope of Israel.

IX.

JESUS AND THE JEWISH TEMPLE.

Luke 2 : 41–52; Matthew 17 : 24–27; John 2 : 13–22.

1. *The child Jesus with his parents* in the temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2 : 41–52).—The Gospels abound in direct and formal assertions of our Lord's divine nature and heavenly Sonship; yet they abound also in those slighter hints and seemingly unconscious references which, to the thoughtful mind, have as arguments even a more decisive force. The direct assertions, the open miracles, might easily be the product of fabrication; the indirect hints and casual allusions are generally beyond suspicion; nothing explains them but their genuineness. Of such a character, and beautifully illustrative of our Saviour's habitual mode of regarding himself, are several of the references in the Gospels to his relations to the temple. The temple was pre-eminently the house of God. Jerusalem, as the seat of the theocratic government, was the city, and the temple was the palace, of the Great King. How then would the self-exiled and incarnate Son of God feel and bear himself toward this earthly home of his heavenly Father—this earthly palace of the heavenly King?

The first illustration which I notice occurs in Luke 2 : 41, in connection with the only incident which inspiration has selected for record from the period between Christ's earliest

infancy and his baptism. His parents, according to their custom, in his thirteenth year went up to Jerusalem to the Passover; and on this occasion, as, we may well presume, on every similar subsequent occasion, the child of prophecy and miracle accompanied them. Missing their son in returning at the close of the feast, they retraced their anxious steps to the sacred city. After a weary search they at last, to their surprise, found him in the temple, and the yearning heart of the mother at once vented itself in an affectionate chiding to him for having left them to seek him sorrowing. "Why were ye seeking me?" was the memorable reply. "Knew ye not that I must be at my Father's?" So I translate, in accordance with a majority of the best ancient and modern interpreters. The rendering of the common version, "about my Father's business," is indeed, grammatically, equally defensible, but much less intrinsically probable. That the child of twelve years should chide his parents for seeking him, on the ground that he ought to be engaged in the business of his Father, is scarcely natural, especially when we remember that he immediately returned home with them, and remained in retirement and subjection until his thirtieth year. Besides, the appropriate and modest act and attitude of the child, "hearing and asking them questions," would scarcely be designated by such language. But that he should gently chide them, when they had missed him, for *looking* for him in a long and anxious search, is exceedingly natural and beautifully suggestive. "Why spend time in *seeking* for me? Where should the Son be but in the house of his Father? You should have known at once where to find me. Your feet should have turned instinctively and instantly to the temple, where, in Jerusalem, you would as

naturally look for the Son of the Great King, as at Nazareth, in the abode of his human parents." The language, then, is no reproof to his parents for seeking to draw him back from the business of his heavenly mission to secular relations and pursuit; this, at his tender age, would have been scarcely appropriate. Neither was it intended as any *formal and serious rebuke* for their labor in searching for him. It is just a passing and delicate intimation to them of his higher relations and heavenly Sonship. "Why spend time in seeking for me, as if there could be any doubt about where to find me? Where should the child be but in the house of his Father?" It is simply a graceful and touching reminder to them of his true nature, and of the higher parentage to which the earthly relation was entirely subordinate.

Thus early does the child Jesus assert his divine relationship; thus early remind his mother of his high origin and destiny. At Nazareth, his parents were Joseph and Mary, and their humble house was his home. At Jerusalem, God was his Father, and the house of God, the temple, was the natural resort for the child. We may well believe that the sight and presence of the temple awoke in the child ideas and emotions which partially slumbered amid the seclusion of the distant Galilean hills, but which now drew him with resistless impulse to this so dear and hallowed, though sadly desecrated, spot. Here, therefore, he lingered by the right of the Son in the house of his Father. The full significance of his reply to his mother's affectionate expostulation was of course not understood even by herself. The pen of inspiration has recorded the incident as shedding a most beautiful light on the character and history of the sacred child. It is but a glimpse, yet a glimpse that opens into the profounder

recesses of his spiritual life. It shows clearly the deeper than human consciousness: the higher than merely human relations.

2. *Jesus and the temple tax.* — The incident that I have just related in illustration of our Lord's relations to the temple, occurred within the precincts and under the inspiration of the temple itself. That to which I now call attention, was due to no such influences, and shows how his conscious relations to the temple and its God followed him through his later career. It meets our unexpectant eye at a late period in our Lord's earthly life, far away from the temple, on the shores of his favorite Gennesaret. As he entered Capernaum on one occasion, the collectors of the temple tax—the half-shekel, equal to *two Attic drachmas*, which the Jews annually paid to maintain the national worship especially in connection with the temple—came to Peter and asked him if his Master did not pay the *didrachma*, or temple tax. Peter inconsiderately, but naturally, replied that he did. As he entered the house, the Lord, divinely cognizant of what had occurred, anticipated the disciple with the question, "From whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? From their own children or from strangers"? (*i. e.*, from aliens, persons outside of their own household.) Peter replied, "From strangers." "Then," rejoined Jesus, "are the children free." The point of the question and the justness of the inference are obvious at a glance. The temple tax was a tribute imposed by the heavenly Monarch, to keep up, as it were, his royal state; Jesus is the Son of that King; by universal usage, therefore, he is rightfully exempt from it. The kings of the earth do not exact the means of keeping up their princely establishments and regal state from their

own children; they derive their revenues from sources outside of the royal household. It must be a monstrous anomaly for royalty to maintain itself by levying on its own household. The sons are free; and by logical consequence the Son of the heavenly King cannot properly be called on to aid in maintaining the national worship. The temple is his Father's house and palace; the support of its appointments and services should be drawn from others rather than the Son. Of course the Saviour stated the principle, not from any desire to avail himself of it. Having asserted his right of exemption, he immediately waives it, and proceeds miraculously to meet the demand. His purpose was to instruct Peter; to drop into his mind one of those pregnant hints, which, though imperfectly understood at the time, would furnish matter for instructive reflection. It teaches us too, how habitually and really Jesus bore under his human guise, and with all his human sympathies, the consciousness of his divine relation.

The force and beauty of this striking and picturesque little incident are nearly lost in the common version, by the unfortunate rendering of a single word. The term *didrachma*, or double drachma, equal to the sacred half-shekel, would instantly suggest to the reader of the original the character of the tribute in question. The reader of the common version gets no such idea. The general word *tribute* suggests simply a *political* tax, levied by the Roman government; and, so understood, the incident is without meaning, and the brief but beautiful reasoning of our Lord loses all its relevancy. To that government the special political relations of the Lord would be a matter of indifference. The Son of David and the humblest peasant would in its eye be equally aliens, and equally liable to its exactions. It is as

temple money, as a tribute demanded by the God of the temple and the founder of the national worship, that the language becomes beautifully significant and forcible. We may add that the incidental and seemingly matter-of-course form of the reasoning gives it additional point. Jesus does not stop to argue his own relation to the God of the temple: that he takes for granted. Starting from his admitted premise, he gently reminds Peter of the inconsiderate haste with which he had declared the liability of his Master to the temple tribute.

3. *Jesus Cleansing the Temple* (John 2 : 13-22). I have noticed two references in the Gospel narratives to our Lord's relations to the temple at Jerusalem. Another and still more striking display of this relation is made in the two separate but kindred acts of *cleansing* the temple, recorded, the one in John, and the other in the synoptical Gospels. Twice in our Lord's ministry—once at its commencement, once at its close, and both times in connection with the Passover—he gave vent to the righteous indignation with which the desecration of his and his Father's house had inspired him. Business arrangements, made at first for the convenience of the temple worshipers, partly in exchanging foreign coins for the sacred shekel, partly in procuring sacrificial victims, had gradually enlarged their proportions, until, at the time of the great feasts especially, the outer courts of the temple were filled with the noisy confusion of secular traffic. The sight was intolerably painful to the holy eye of the Son. In his earlier years, when visiting Jerusalem with his parents, we may well suppose that the bosom of the divine child glowed with holy indignation at this defilement of the sacred precincts. How often had he burned with an eager desire to expel the

unhallowed lust of gain and the usurpations of worldly traffic from the place of prayer! But his hour was not yet come, and in resigned obedience he waited until the hour appointed by the Father. We often think, with admiration, of the exemplary filial obedience which, during thirty years, the heavenly child rendered to his human parents. A far heavier trial, I think, was his patient submission during all these years to the will of his Heavenly Father, adjourning so long his entrance on the work of Messianic reform to which he looked forward. Son of God, as he was, he was obliged to wait, and did in patience wait, until the time was ripe for the opening of his career of physical and spiritual healing.

Among his earliest acts, when that time came, was the cleansing of the temple. Visiting Jerusalem at the first Passover after his baptism, he finds, as doubtless on former occasions, the sacred precincts defiled by a usurping traffic. He hastened to vindicate their violated sanctity. With a scourge, the symbol of might, he appears among the traffickers, and authoritatively demands their instant withdrawal. Surprise and consternation seize them. They wait, probably, for no act of outward violence. The majesty of his look, the authority of his tone, the evident purity and earnestness of his zeal, conspire, with their consciousness of guilt, to secure their instant obedience. Conscience-smitten and terror-stricken, they cower and flee before him, and calm and silence are restored to the holy precincts.

On the details of the scene I cannot dwell. The act was, in reality, one of the most remarkable in his wonderful life—one of the most striking assertions of his Messianic prerogative. It was in literal and startling fulfillment of the prophecy, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple."

He *came* to his temple, not in the outward pomp which the people expected, but with a sublime spiritual majesty infinitely transcending that of any outward pageant. He performed an act befitting his character as Messiah—an act that alike revealed his personal purity, and told of the righteousness that was to characterize his reign. A mere outward pageant would have dazzled the world, but would have been essentially unmeaning. This was profoundly, impressively significant. Cleansing at the outset of his career the temple of God, restoring to it its sanctity as a place of prayer, told, in language which the Sermon on the Mount but translated into words, the spiritual and holy nature of the kingdom which he was about to set up.

Again, as it marked his Messianic purity it marked his Messianic authority. No other Jew would have ventured on such an act; no other, in venturing, but would have ignominiously failed. The worldliness that had invaded the temple was too bold to yield to anything short of manifest divinity, especially half-consecrated, as it seemed, by its connection with the sacred service of the temple. Jesus came with authority; he came as the Anointed One of Heaven; he came as the Son of God. He performed the act of cleansing by virtue of his high Messianic prerogative.

Once more: The act strikingly illustrates Christ's special relation to the temple, and to the God of the temple. He came to the temple as to his Father's house. He felt the righteous indignation of a Son over the desecration of his Father's dwelling-place. Few human emotions are more painful than those with which a son comes to a once cherished, but now forsaken and dismantled, abode of his fathers. Few feelings of indignation would be more natural and keen than

those with which the son of a king would see, in a distant province of his father's kingdom, the palace which he had reared, and where he had planted the insignia of his empire, rudely invaded, taken possession of, and wantonly outraged by lawless subjects. How sternly would he rebuke them! How promptly chase them from the scene of their usurpations! But very faintly does this typify and illustrate the mingled grief and anger with which the incarnate Son of God contemplated the wanton defilement and abuse of his Heavenly Father's earthly dwelling-place. Bad enough to see the earth at large reeking with pollution! Bad enough to see all the nations given over to the abominations of idolatry! Bad enough to see the great temple of the universe, as far as the wickedness of man could effect it, wrested from its Maker and rightful Lord, and converted into a vast shrine for the orgies of a false and pestilent worship! But all too bad that the one single spot of earth unprofaned by the rites of heathenism—the one single sanctuary which, amid the innumerable temples of paganism, bore solitary witness to the presence of the Living God—that this too should be invaded, if not by the formal rites, yet by the essential spirit of idolatry! "Zeal for thine house consumeth me," said one of the ancient servants of God; and his words but anticipated and feebly uttered the emotions of the divine Son when, in his transient self-exile from the courts of the heavenly glory, he looked upon the violated sanctity, the outraged majesty of the one earthly recognized house and dwelling-place of his Father. The cleansing then of the temple, symbolized the purity that was to characterize the dominion of the Messiah; it marked his Messianic authority; and possibly even more than all, it told of the zeal of the *Son* for the honor of his Father. His

"Father's house" had been converted into "a house of merchandise," and he hastens to redeem it from the vile uses to which it was prostituted. The scene is another of those beautiful incidental lights which illustrate the relation of Jesus to the temple, and to the God of the temple.

One word on the often-mooted question whether the cleansing of the temple occurred but once in our Lord's ministry. One might suppose that a mere reference to the record would set it entirely at rest. John records a cleansing as taking place at the opening of our Lord's ministry; the synoptical Gospels record one at its close. It is an event which would be equally likely to take place twice as once—which would be eminently and equally befitting both periods. If, therefore, we accept the authority of the sacred historians for the occurrence of the event at all, we cannot doubt that it occurred twice; and the charge of discrepancy, which some critics have been so ready to bring against the evangelists, is utterly gratuitous. The synoptists omit the mention of its earlier occurrence, as they deal mainly with Christ's ministry in Galilee. John omits the mention of the later, as he omits many of the events recorded in the earlier Gospels.

X.

THREE PARABLES.

1. *The Prodigal Son* (*Luke 15 : 12–32*). In this and the following chapter there are found, in close proximity, three striking parables, all founded on the possession and use of property.

The first, that of the "Prodigal Son," shows us a young man put in possession of his patrimony, squandering thriftlessly his property, reckless of coming need, and reduced to beggary and impending starvation; the second shows us a man shrewdly and forecastingly turning the property of another to his own advantage, so as to secure to himself a home and friends against the hour of destitution; the third shows us a man not recklessly squandering, but so selfishly expending his own property upon his own gratification, as to fail of making to himself friends by means of it in the spiritual world. The second parable is evidently suggested by that feature in the first in which the son improvidently squanders his fortune without making any provision for the evil day; the third is in immediate illustration, by contrast, of the injunction of the second, "Make to yourselves friends of [from, by means of] the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail ye may be received into everlasting habitations."

The first, that of the "Prodigal Son," is called forth by the murmuring of the scribes and Pharisees, the religious aristocracy of the Jewish people over the hospitable reception given by the Saviour to those spiritual aliens of the Jewish State,

the "publicans and sinners." That he who claimed to be the promised and long-expected Deliverer of the nation—the Messiah that was to come, the Hope and destined King of Israel—should consort with the lowly, should eat with publicans and sinners, should prefer their society to that of the scribes and Pharisees, was ground of serious offense; was enough of itself to discredit his claims to high national honors.

"Your Master," said they to his disciples, "receiveth sinners and eateth with them!"

Jesus presents one or two brief defenses of his proceeding, and then at length sets forth the great principles of his kingdom in the beautiful narrative of the thriftless, self-exiled, starving, penitent, and forgiven prodigal, whose reception by his compassionate father exposes him to reproaches from the elder son, such as the scribes and Pharisees visit upon the Lord. To defend his course, our Lord utters three successive parables, all tending to the same point, all illustrating the same great principle, the saving of sinners as the grand purpose of the gospel. The joy of the shepherd over the recovery of the strayed sheep; the exultation of the woman upon finding her lost piece of silver; the father's festive welcome of his profligate but penitent child—all illustrate the joy with which God and angels contemplate the spectacle of a reclaimed sinner. And to set the matter in the strongest light, our Saviour seizes on that well-known principle of our nature which prompts us to rejoice with a double joy over that which had been periled and lost, for the very reason that it *had been in peril.* We prize health more when we snatch it from the grasp of sickness. We attach a tenfold value to life when we rescue it from the jaws

of impending death. We rejoice with a deeper and more demonstrative exultation over the small good which has been seriously endangered, than over the much larger one, in regard to which the placid current of our joy has been broken by no fearful apprehensions of its loss. And so, says the Saviour, in the spiritual world: "There is more conscious and exultant delight over one soul rescued from the ruins of the apostasy, than over multitudes that had never incurred the hazard of perdition." "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance." This thought forms the key-note of the parables. The shepherd rejoices more over the one recovered sheep, than over the ninety-nine that had remained in the fold; the woman regards with livelier pleasure the single coin recovered to her little store than all the nine which she had kept in safety; and the father greets the return of an alien and profligate child with demonstrations of joy, such as had never been drawn forth by years of faithful and unfaltering service. The picture is perfectly true to nature. The sentiment finds its echo and response in the universal experience of humanity. On the deepest darkness dawns the most welcome day. From the deadliest sorrow springs the most exquisite joy. The continued happiness of the unfallen is a matter of course—*they* have never been in peril. But the recovery of those who had been given over as sons of perdition, awakens a thrill of joy proportionate to the depth and fearfulness of their ruin.

2. *The unjust steward* (*Luke 16 : 1–13*). This is the second of this triad of parables which, having a certain subtle connection with each other have all to do with the use and responsibilities of property. This, of the "Unjust

Steward," presents perhaps some of the more difficult problems for solution. One of the most disputed points is what personage corresponds to the rich man. Olshausen supposes him to be the World, and the prince of this world, the devil; Meyer, Mammon, or riches; Alford, God. Of these, Alford is unquestionably nearest the truth; that is, his view involves the least perversion of the natural scope of the parable. The true view, however, is undoubtedly that of Ebrard and De Wette, who maintain that the rich man does not properly and strictly represent either. The parable, like that of the "Good Samaritan," and the "Prodigal Son," simply seeks to illustrate a principle, and the rich man and his steward are merely employed as personages through whom the truth may be brought out. Nothing more confuses and darkens the parables—nothing more breaks in upon their simple unity and mars their beauty, than the attempt to fasten an undue significance upon their several parts, and to find a separate and independent doctrine in what is manifestly the mere drapery of the parable, the outward imagery essential to its parabolic character.

The grand purpose of the parable is to illustrate the necessity of spiritual prudence in so using the goods of the present life, as to secure to ourselves spiritual treasures, "the true riches," an inheritance of the soul, when our earthly heritage shall have passed away. This is done by showing the forecast with which an earthly steward provides for the coming exigencies of the present life. It will be readily seen, then, why the Lord selects a steward rather than a son, as the medium of the illustration. It is evidently to indicate the tenure by which all men hold their earthly possessions—the relation in which all stand to God, the universal proprietor.

The riches of the world are, in the nature and necessity of the case, but temporary. All hold them but in trust; all have got to be removed from them; and all by-and-by to render an account of their stewardship. Then, those who have been faithful as stewards will be admitted to an inheritance as sons; those who have been faithful in what was another's—what was in no proper sense their own—will be placed over permanent possessions; those who have used with discretion the deceitful and unrighteous mammon, will be entrusted with the true riches.

Thus far all is plain. But now comes the stumbling-block. Why does the Saviour take, to illustrate his doctrine, the case, not of a faithful, but of an unjust steward? Why not, as in Matthew, take one who, having received five talents went and traded with them—made them other five talents; and thus, when the hour of reckoning came, was advanced to higher honor, and welcomed into the joy of his Lord? Would it not seem more accordant with the character of the Saviour and the great principle which he inculcates, to employ *such* an example,—that of a faithful and upright, as well as prudent steward,—instead of founding his lesson of spiritual wisdom on the basis of an example of mere worldly, unprincipled, and fraudulent sagacity?

To this I answer, first, that the Saviour wishes to bring out distinctly the great fact that as all men are stewards, so to all there is coming a time of need and of destitution; when they will be put out of their stewardship; when the world will actually abandon them; when all earthly resources will be cut off, and they, left friendless and portionless on earth, will need another class of friends and another kind of home. This would naturally be done, not by assuming a steward who was

faithful to his master's interests, and therefore would be promoted under the same master, and in the same line of employment,—who thus experiences no great change, and no actual exigency,—but by supposing one who had forfeited the favor of his employer, and who was driven out into a destitution irretrievable, except so far as his prudent foresight had provided against it. The assumption of a faithful steward would have furnished no scope for representing the actual change of condition,—that actual thrusting out from the stewardship and attendant comforts,—that pressing need of other friends, and another home, which is the universal destination of our death-devoted humanity.

But secondly, might not the same end have been accomplished by representing the master as wicked or unjust, and the steward as faithful, and in his fidelity securing friends who should have received him when driven out from his stewardship? Undoubtedly. But then the parable would have been much less forcible, because the contrast would have been much less striking. The argument now runs thus: You see how wise and sagacious the men of this world are,—how shrewd to provide for themselves home and friends in their hour of need, even at the expense of an utter disregard of the obligations of right and virtue. How highly they estimate this virtue of prudence is shown by the fact that the master of the unjust steward praised the display of it, even when exhibited at his own expense, and in violation of duties to him. Such, says the Saviour, are the men of this world. So shrewd are they in their calculations for the future, so wise in their generation, so highly do they estimate the value of a provident regard for our future well-being, that they pause at no scruples, hesitate at no fraud which may subserve the accomplishment

of their ends: and not only do they practise knavery themselves, but even its very victims lose sight of the injustice in admiration of the foresight which works through it. If such, then, be the value of foresight that men practise it for earthly friends, for a temporary home, for deceitful riches, at the expense of justice and honor,—and to a certain extent applaud it in their fellows,—how eminently rational and proper to practise it for heavenly friends, for an eternal home, for the true and undeceiving riches, for an everlasting inheritance, and in accordance with the eternal obligations of justice! Thus conceived and put, the argument for spiritual prudence and foresight becomes doubly and overwhelmingly strong. Still another reason, I think, which prompted the Saviour to this form of the parable, was to place in stronger contrast the deceitful and the true riches; to show how thoroughly money is the mammon of unrighteousness; how easily it is perverted and prostituted to unjust and base uses; and therefore to place its possessors doubly on their guard. The riches of this world —our Saviour evidently meant to suggest to the avaricious Pharisees who stood by—easily becomes the mammon of unrighteousness; such is its deceitful nature, that there is imminent danger that in husbanding it for earthly uses, we may sacrifice our spiritual and eternal welfare.

I trust I have made clear the general scope and purpose of this parable, and the propriety of making an unjust steward the vehicle of the lesson which it conveys. As it is regarded as peculiarly difficult, I may be pardoned a moment's repetition. First, we are all *stewards*, and amenable to God, the universal and absolute proprietor. Second, it was desirable to present a case of absolute ejection from the stewardship, in order to meet more exactly the case of *men* who have, *at all*

events, to be ejected from their earthly possessions, and with whom it becomes the most imperative dictate of prudence to provide themselves with other friends and another home. This renders natural the supposition of a faithless and profligate steward, who is turned out of his master's employ. And this being the character of the deposed steward, the expedient to which he will resort for meeting the emergencies of his condition, will be likely to be correspondingly unscrupulous. Nor will this weaken the force of the parable,—whose purpose is to recommend spiritual foresight in view of that universal ejectment by death which we are all to experience,—inasmuch as the moral sphere into which the parable passes over, purifies it from all corruptible and grosser elements. Take the analogous case of the man who, finding a treasure hid in a field, goes and sells all he has and buys the field. The parable here does not concern itself in the slightest degree with the motives of the purchaser; they may be intensely miserly; and the act of purchase may be accompanied by fraudulent, or at least dishonorable concealment. To all this the parable is entirely indifferent. Its single purpose is to represent, under this figure, that priceless worth of the kingdom of heaven which makes it wisdom to sacrifice for it all our other possessions—*here,* of course, virtue and integrity belonging to the very essence of the action. So in the case before us. The worldly providence may, or may not, be controlled by virtuous motives. The single point insisted upon is the importance, the pressing necessity of the providence, the forecast, the securing of friends and a home against an impending and inevitable need; while it grows out of the very nature of the case that the injustice and fraud which marked the earthly transaction become wholly inadmissible in the

higher sphere where, in fact, prudence and virtue blend into one and become identical. Thirdly. I am satisfied that the Saviour intended by this form of the parable to put the stamp of reprobation on human riches; to remind his hearers—avaricious Pharisees, see ver. 14—how deceitful and false they are; how liable to be prostituted to unjust purposes; and how easily they may drown their pursuers and votaries in destruction and perdition. Thus, while teaching directly a lesson of spiritual foresight, he deals an indirect but mighty blow at that idolatry of wealth which is the gospel's grand foe in every age. And finally,—such is the tacit argument,—if the children of this world display such prudent forethought for temporary abodes, at the expense of justice and right, how strong the argument for exercising, for the sake of eternal tabernacles, that moral prudence, that true wisdom which is the loftiest attribute of humanity.

I proceed now to particulars. Verse 8. "And the lord commended the unjust steward because he did wisely; for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." A word here first upon the translation. "The lord" is, with little doubt, the lord or master of the steward, and should be rendered, "his lord." Again, here, as in too many places in the New Testament, our version confounds the very dissimilar virtues of wisdom and prudence, which are separated in the original. Thus says the Saviour, "Be ye prudent as serpents and harmless (guileless) as doves." The prudent virgins evinced their prudence by taking oil along with their lamps. In the case supposed in the parable, this was their highest virtue; they differed from the foolish virgins only in their provident regard for a probable exigency. So here, the steward did not act *wisely;*

he only acted shrewdly, intelligently, prudently, and for this sagacity received commendation. Prudence is a merely intellectual virtue; wisdom is an intellectual and moral virtue. It implies the harmonious co-working of all the faculties of the soul—a judicious adaptation of means to lofty and noble ends. The forethought of the children of the world is only prudence; the forethought of the children of light is wisdom.

Many have deemed it strange and unnatural that commendation should be pronounced upon the unjust steward; and they have been disposed to regard the language as ironical. Yet it is difficult to see how an ironical construction can consist with the obvious scope of the parable. That is evidently to enforce the lesson of spiritual foresight from an example of temporal foresight; and to turn the commendation into irony defeats the end of the illustration. The difficulty vanishes if we remember first that it is not the Saviour who utters the commendation, but the master of the steward, who, as one of the "children of this world," can admire and applaud an act of sagacious foresight, indifferent to its moral quality, and in spite of its injurious bearing upon his own interests; and secondly, and still more, if we recollect that it was not the injustice of the steward that was praised, but his prudence—his provident and dexterous anticipation of the season of want. This is the whole extent of the commendation; it is limited both by the circumstances of the case, and by the words standing in immediate connection, "because he acted prudently." There is no more important canon of scriptural interpretation than that we do not press words to their utmost capacity of meaning, but rather interpret them by the obvious demands and restrictions of the context. Thus Peter and the apostles were the founda-

tion of the edifice of the church, not in every possible sense, nor in the highest possible sense, but in one very important sense, such as justified the language. Our Saviour "loved" the young man who came to him, not with the complacent love with which he loved John or Peter, but with that tender, compassionate sympathy with which a man may regard another in whom he sees the finer traits of natural character. Many Jews "believed" upon Christ, not savingly, but simply as declaring their conviction that he was the Messiah. I cite these examples as cautions against forcing words, in the free and artless language of the New Testament, beyond the obvious requisitions of the context.

"The children of this world are wiser" (more prudent), is the commencement of our Lord's application of the parable. Its obvious meaning is, that they are more shrewdly provident in their own generation for their temporal interests, than the children of light in *their* generation for their spiritual interests. "And *I* say unto *you*," adds the Saviour; as if anticipating their thought that such a case could have no possible interest for them, and reminding them that they could, in fact, claim from it a most salutary lesson: "Make to yourselves friends of the (by means of the) mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

This passage is evidently the application of the above parable, and draws its imagery and interpretation from it. Thus regarding it we shall find in it no difficulty. The steward, while in the possession of wealth—whether his own or another's—had, by means of it, secured to himself friends, who, when his present resources failed him, should receive him into an earthly shelter. Now, says our Lord, imitate in

a higher sphere, and with true spiritual wisdom, the sagacious foresight of the child of this world. So use your earthly wealtn (the mammon of unrighteousness—an epithet suggested partly by the intrinsically false nature of worldly wealth, and partly by the fact that in the parable just given it had shown itself the supple instrument of unrighteousness) that ye may secure to yourselves friends who, when it fails you (this is probably the true rendering), shall receive you into abiding, even eternal habitations. Convert the unrighteous mammon into a servant of righteousness; where the men of this world show prudence, do ye show wisdom; what they shrewdly but unscrupulously use as a means of providing themselves a temporary shelter, do ye wisely and righteously use for securing an eternal habitation. The "friends" who are to "receive" us might, perhaps, so far as the parable itself is concerned, be God and the powers of the spiritual world, whose favor we secure by the right use of our temporal possessions; but the following parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which is obviously intended to illustrate the case of him who does *not* use his worldly wealth for the securing of a spiritual home, points rather to the poor, and those whom our worldly riches may benefit, as those who are to admit and welcome us into the dwelling-places of bliss. That these friends have not the power or the office *literally* to receive us into Paradise is matter of no special consequence. The idea is carried out with reference to the parable above, where the benefited debtors were to receive the steward, their benefactor, and illustrated in the following parable, where the selfish indifference of the rich man, luxuriating in his wealth, to the sufferings of the wretched Lazarus at his gate, deprived him of one who otherwise would have hastened upon his

death to open to him the gates of paradise, and welcome him to an eternal rest.

In the following verses the Saviour adheres in part to the imagery of the parable, but in part abandons it for the intrinsic relations of man to God, and of the earthly to the heavenly riches. Our earthly state is one of trial. The insignificant treasures of earth are committed to us to test our fitness for receiving the higher treasures of God's spiritual kingdom. If we prove faithless in the former we can urge no claim to the latter. If we have squandered and abused the lesser treasures of God's providence, how can we claim the richer inheritance of his grace? If we have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon—the false, the deceiving, and too often corrupting riches of this world—how can we hope for the true riches, of which the former are but a shadow? And if, as stewards, we have failed to use rightly and wisely that which is another's, that in which we have but a transient proprietorship, that which we may be called at any moment to surrender, who will invest us with a permanent inheritance?

How solemn, how significant, how profound the teaching! What depth of thought in the Saviour's words! How sublimely simple their contrast of the riches of earth and the riches of heaven! The "little" against the "much"; the "unrighteous" and deceitful against the genuine and the "true"; the "transitory and the alien" against the "possessed and the permanent." Such is the representation which leads us to ponder "which we will serve," when, in the following verse, the choice is presented between God and mammon.

3. *The rich man and Lazarus* (*Luke 16 : 19–31*). This ends the sublime and the solemn trilogy in which our

Lord draws a series of weighty spiritual lessons from the use of earthly property. It is connected with that immediately preceding by several statements, apparently incoherent in their abrupt sententiousness, yet abundantly plain in their general scope. They are leveled at the Pharisees, who, covetous, haughty, self-righteous, stood listening, half in scorn and half in terror to the Great Teacher, and remind them that their sensuality and wickedness, though buried from the sight of men, are open to the eye of God; that the old dispensation, which had fenced around their boasted privileges, is passing away; but that the obligations of righteousness are unrepealable and eternal. He illustrates the statement by insisting on the sanctity of that marriage relation which they dissolved on the most frivolous pretenses, and then by embodying in a parable that great law of beneficent love under which we hold all earthly possessions. The parable is conceived, however, in immediate relation to the injunction, "Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it fails you, they [your friends] may receive you into everlasting habitations." This should be borne distinctly in mind, for it determines the general form and construction of the parable. The possessor of worldly wealth is brought into immediate contact with the child of want, whom he has thus the opportunity of befriending; and then as the scene changes, and the veil of the future is lifted, we see the consequences of his selfish neglect, in his failure to secure alike an admission to the abodes of bliss, and a kindly ministry in mitigation of his pains.

Thus we see, first, why Lazarus is represented as laid at the rich man's gate, on which some needless speculation has been expended. It is simply to bring into close relation and sharp

contrast the two personages of the parable; to represent most vividly the blind and reckless indifference of the child of wealth, by bringing to his very gate the proper object of his charities, whom a wise foresight would now secure as a friend against that time of need which comes to all. Here is the lordly reveller in the luxuries of earth; there, the indigent wretch who pines for the crumbs from his table, and in default of human succor, is left to the compassionate ministry of the dogs.

Again, the special idea of the parable accounts for the order in which their respective deaths are mentioned. The poor man died and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died and was buried. "The death of the rich man *last*," says Alford, following Trench, "should be remembered. Lazarus was taken soon from his sufferings: Dives was left longer, that he might have space to repent." This is little better than fanciful; the real reason has escaped them. The very conception of the parable requires that Lazarus should be in the future world in advance of the rich man; that he be already an occupant of the abodes of bliss that, when the rich man arrives, his miserable short-sightedness may be manifest in having failed to secure by his earthly charities a friend who would now have hastened, not merely to extend to him the poor relief of cooling his tongue, but to open to him, with eager gratitude, the portals of the everlasting mansions.

And in harmony with this general conception of the parable is the portraiture of its two leading personages. It is a description not so much of character as of condition. The one is abundantly supplied with the goods of this world, splendidly apparelled, and faring sumptuously; the other is

helplessly and miserably poor. The rich man's crime, his disqualification for the kingdom of heaven, so far as stated in the parable, is his wealth, and his selfish improvidence in its use. And even the selfishness is not so much contained in the description, as left to be inferred from the fact that he allowed the needy mendicant to lie unrelieved at his gate. The portraiture itself simply places the one, in his luxurious abundance, over against the other in his utter destitution. The former is not necessarily vicious, any more than the latter is necessarily virtuous. What the parable charges him with, and that only by implication, is neglect, indifference, improvidence. He had a chance, by the mammon of unrighteousness, to secure to himself a permanent friend, and he neglected it. He had a chance to invest a part of his deceitful and evanescent wealth in an incorruptible and eternal inheritance, and he recklessly threw away the oppportunity. No positive wickedness is alleged against him *in the sphere of the parabolic representation*, more than against the five virgins, whose failure to take an adequate supply of oil excluded them from the marriage festival, or against the man who, on finding a treasure hidden in a field, should neglect to secure it by selling all his property. In the sphere of earthly action, the proceeding is simply improvident; in the spiritual sphere, to which, of course, the parable points, it is not only improvidence, but wickedness. In the parable before us, the difference is essentially that of a rich and of a poor man: of a rich man, to whom belong the rich man's character and destination; of a poor man who, as such, is entitled to the kingdom of God. This is, indeed, not in accordance with the absolute truth of things; but it is in accordance with the prevailing gospel representation, and is founded in deep principles of our nature.

Among men generally,—and to its full extent among the Jews of our Saviour's time,—wealth was held in honor, and poverty in contempt. The rich, the powerful, the proud, were pronounced happy on earth, and candidates for the blessedness of heaven. The poor, the lowly, the sorrowing, were spurned from the homes of earth and the abodes of future bliss. The gospel reversed all this. It brought down the proud and exalted the humble. It denounced woes upon the rich, and uttered its blessings on the poor. The opening beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount, is a blessing on the poor, the literally poor, who have a spirit corresponding to their position. Luke gives it without qualification (6 : 21, 24), "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall weep and lament." Here is precisely the key-note of our parable. There is no more perfect clue to its interpretation than these brief utterances of our Lord. They proceed on the assumption that poverty is blessed, and that riches are cursed; that the affluent of earth shall be beggared in the world of retribution, and the beggar exalted to Paradise. And such is the general tenor of the New Testament language. Riches are treated as a danger and an evil. The rich young man is commanded, as the first requisite of discipleship, to sell all his property and distribute to the poor, and he shall have treasure in heaven; and a rich man's entrance into the kingdom of God is reckoned as one of the miraculous marvels of Almighty power.

Of course all this is not to be taken literally. In the eye of God, riches are nothing and poverty is nothing. The costly sacrifices of wealth, the two mites of indigence, have value only as they express the spirit of love. It is *always under-*

stood that mere poverty can give no title to a heavenly inheritance, just as that mere wealth is no ground for exclusion. But the first business of the gospel is to reverse the false judgments of men; to strip off the gilded trappings which deck with an illusory splendor the gods of their idolatry. Associated, therefore, as wealth is, inveterately and most obstinately in the human conception with happiness here and hereafter, powerful as is its hold upon the affections of men, formidable and manifold as are its tempations, what wonder that it should be taken as the symbol of that worldliness with which, practically, it is so commonly associated? What wonder that its antithesis, poverty, so despised of men, should be represented as in honor with God? The New Testament deals with the concrete rather than the abstract, and strikes at the subtle principle of evil through its customary outward embodiment.

So much for the literal interpretation of the parable. Thus far De Wette is right against Alford, in making it the condemnation of wealth and the exaltation of poverty. But De Wette errs grievously in making this its ultimate scope. This is only the shell, the husk, the parabolic garb. We must penetrate beneath it to the spiritual truth. We must translate the parable into that spiritual realm where alone it finds, like every other parable, its true significance. When the Saviour elsewhere condemns wealth, he in reality merely condemns the worldliness of which wealth is but too common a concomitant, and therefore a natural symbol. When he blesses poverty, he in reality blesses that spirit of renunciation of the world, of which outward poverty seems the natural exponent. So here, when we come to apply the parable, the rich man symbolizes him who makes a god of this world, no matter

though he were the veriest mendicant in existence; Lazarus, him whose treasure is in heaven, no matter though kingdoms yielded him their revenues. Thus the outward garb of the parable drops off of itself; the factitious distinctions of worldly wealth and poverty melt away. The intrinsic distinction of character takes the place of the adventitious one of condition. The relative position of the parties might, in fact, be reversed. The rich man who would hold his worldly goods loosely, using them as God's steward for beneficent ends, might and would be he whom the angels would delight to bear to paradise. The beggar who, steeped to the lips in poverty, yet clung in *heart* to the world, would be the heir to the curse and to the realm of fire. Or, on the other hand, the rich man might have fed and clothed all the beggars of a kingdom, might have given all his goods to feed the poor and his body to be burned, and yet for want of the true spirit of charity might be as far as ever from the eternal mansions.

In opposition then to Trench, I maintain that we have here decisively a parable. The rich man and the poor man are each more than is contained in the actual description. The rich man stands for the idolater of this world, whatever form his idolatry may assume; the poor man for the humble child of faith, who, whether in rags or on a throne, lives in communion with the Invisible. And so again the change of fortunes, which, in the parable, appears as the mere adjustment of the scales of outward circumstance, becomes, in the application, the righteous award to character—to a life of godliness on the one hand, and of godless worldliness on the other. Thus explaining the narrative, we press nothing and we lose nothing. We do no violence to the parabolic language for the sake of forcing upon it a meaning which literally it

will not bear; while at the same time, by translating it as a parable into a higher sphere, with other declarations of the New Testament as our guide, we give to it all its solemn and weighty meaning. A further examination of the parable sustains this view.

As concerns the mere *form of representation*, the rich man is simply a rich man, and as such has his good things in the present life; the poor man is simply a poor man, and as such is entitled to blessedness hereafter. By the mere natural law of compensation, the poor man, when he dies is conveyed by the angels to the bosom of Abraham, and the rich man after death finds himself in destitution and torment. Lazarus has in life received his evil things, and now is comforted; Dives has received in life his good things, and now is tormented. Neither Christ's portraiture of the two, nor the language of Abraham points, *in itself*, to any radical diversity of character. The narrative is simply a parabolic extension of the "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God: but woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation."

Looking, then, at the obvious and transparent import of these parables, it would seem impossible to doubt who are meant by the righteous that need no repentance. Yet Trench is sorely puzzled in regard to them, and Alford errs in his explanation. Alford says: "They are the *subjectively* righteous, and this saying respects their own view of themselves"—an explanation wholly inconsistent with the whole tenor of the parables. For it would be but sheer nonsense, or poor irony, to say that there is more joy in heaven over one genuine convert to holiness, than over ninety and nine wicked persons who fancy themselves righteous. And the whole structure

of the parables forbids the interpretation. "The ninety and nine sheep," as Trench justly observes, "have *not* wandered; the nine pieces of money have *not* been lost; the elder brother has *not* left his father's house." The sound condition of the one class is just as real as the recovery of the other. But Trench's solution of the matter is equally objectionable. We are to understand "these *righteous* as really such, but also that their righteousness is merely legal, is that of the old dispensation, so that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than they." This is a strange and almost unaccountable perversion of the obvious spirit of the parables. The simple doctrine is that we rejoice more over a sick man restored to health than over one who had not been sick. Should we help the explanation by endeavoring to show that the man who has not been sick is still not thoroughly well? In the parables, the ninety and nine sheep, the nine pieces of silver, the faithful son, are all genuine and true; each of them is just as valuable as the sheep, the piece of money, and the son that had been lost. The recovery but restores to an equality of condition; it establishes in the recovered no intrinsic superiority. The superiority is merely subjective. It lies in the estimation of the possessor. It consists simply in the fact that they have been endangered. They have been dead and are alive; they have been lost and are found; they have awakened bitter apprehension and anguish, and the peculiar joy over their recovery is but the reaction from the sorrow over their loss.

The "righteous" then, here, are those who are really and truly such: unfallen, sinless beings, wherever they may be, who, having never apostatised, have never clouded the joy of the universe, nor stirred the compassions of a benevolent

heart. The principle of the parable is as applicable to heaven as to earth. The angels of God rejoice with a special and peculiar exultation over a ransomed soul. I know not why the assertion does not hold of them literally. They are finite. They cannot grasp at once the whole compass of truth, and all the possibilities of existence. Events break upon them, unexpected, startling, just as upon mortals. The scroll of providential dealing unrolls itself to them by degrees; new and unlooked-for events inspire them with new and unwonted emotions. As they witness some fresh miracle of grace,—the snatching of a sinner from endless and unutterable wrath,—a jubilant ecstacy, such as no soul whose eternal well-being no apostasy had periled could awaken, may well kindle their bosoms and their songs. Of God himself, who sees the end from the beginning, whose infinite intelligence grasps the utmost compass, and fathoms the profoundest depths of being; who sees all the ruin from which the faithful are kept, just as he sees all the ruin from which the penitent are delivered—of him perhaps the language can be used only in accommodation to our finite conceptions. He appears, he *acts* as if he felt so. He leaves the ninety and nine to go after the lost. He turns, as it were, his back on the shining myriads of light, on all the holy ones of the universe,—wherever and however many they are,—that he may come on an embassy of saving love to our apostate and rebellious humanity. Amid the myriad millions of adoring spirits that feel the pulsations of a blissful immortality, he is not content until he has made an effort, such as only a God could make, to rescue this world of man from the dominion of sin and death.

What, then, is meant by the just, the righteous, here, is

manifest enough. They are the sheep that have not left the fold; the money that has not been lost; the son that has not quitted his father's house. They are not ironically, but really, those who have no need of a physician; who are safe in the mansions of eternal love; over whom Infinite compassion has never yearned with trembling solicitude, and who cannot, therefore, inspire the peculiar joy that belongs to the lost one found, to the sick one healed, to the dead one raised. They are strictly holy beings, who, like the angels, need no repentance. Whether such beings are really to be found on earth, is not material to the question. The scribes and Pharisees, fancying themselves righteous, condemn the Saviour for admitting the society of sinners. Our Lord meets them on their own ground. If they are the righteous persons they profess to be,—or just so far as they are such,—they are not the ones who need his ministry of love. In the *application* of the principle to the scribes and Pharisees, there would be indeed a sublime and fearful irony—that they whose hearts are sepulchres of moral putrefaction should set themselves up as patterns of moral excellence, and alone fit to associate with Christ! But the Saviour takes them on their own assumption. He decides not on their case. He lays down a general principle, entirely true, whether it includes them or not, and illustrates it by the parables before us.

The only apparent objection to our view is found in the conduct of the elder son in the third parable, who murmurs at the welcome extended to his reclaimed brother. But the parable is really completed with the welcome reception given to the penitent son, just as in the parable of Dives and Lazarus with the refusal of Abraham to extend relief to the rich man. The incident of the elder son's coming in with his querulous expos-

tulations adds, however, completeness and force, as well as picturesqueness, to the representation; for it gives an opportunity of stating afresh, and even more explicitly, the grounds of the joyful demonstration. "Son," says the father, "thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." There is no need of special joy over thee—thou hast not been lost. There is no need of killing for thee the fatted calf; the whole treasures of the household are always at thy command. But this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. That the son appears murmuring at the father belongs simply to the parabolic representation. This must always have its own truth, irrespective of the spiritual doctrine shadowed forth. Thus, in the parable, the father waits, without making any exertion, until the son of his own accord comes to his senses; the spiritual alien never returns to his father's house until drawn by the active and constraining love of God. In the parable the son is pardoned without atonement or intercessor; not so the spiritual penitent. And so, in the parable, the elder son may indulge in a petulant jealousy over the tokens of joy lavished on the reclaimed profligate; the sinless being whom he *represents* would greet the sinner's return to God with unmingled rejoicings. Such things are not to be pressed; they are essential to this mode of exhibiting truth. The introduction of the present scene furnishes a more direct and sharp rebuke to the murmuring Pharisees. Their conduct, assuming them to be righteous, is like that of the elder son.

I need scarcely add that the parables are weakened instead of strengthened, impoverished instead of enriched, by the many fanciful conceits with which even able interpreters, as Trench and Alford, have overlaid their severe and simple beauty. We gain nothing when we hold up the light of our

farthing candle to the sun of the Saviour's luminous and radiant teachings. The parables of the sheep, the piece of money, the lost son, are all carried out in consistent imagery. To find in them different modes of the expression of God's love, as his *seeking* and *forbearing* love; to find a portrayal of different degrees of guilt,—as that the piece of money represents a greater sinner than the sheep; to find in the woman, the church, or in the house, the church, and in the woman, the Holy Spirit, etc., is to indulge in fancies wholly unworthy of judicious and learned interpreters. It will be time enough, when we have exhausted the Saviour's meaning in the parables, to inject into them our own. And surely the doctrine of God's delight in saving sinners—of the special joy in heaven over a penitent rebel, is a doctrine weighty enough to justify three parables of some thirty verses, without, by spiritualizing all their incidental drapery, finding in them a multitude of side-truths which the Saviour never intended, and which, while seeming to enrich the parable, in fact only mar its unity, and divert attention from its grand central truth. Of course, in the third parable, which draws its imagery from the sphere of rational and moral life, the interest deepens, and the points of legitimate analogy become more numerous.

XI.

THE FATHER OF LIES.

"WHEN he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8 : 44; Rec. Eng. Version). "*When one speaketh falsehood, he speaketh from that which belongeth to him; because his father also is a liar.*"

To the English readers of the common version of this passage, it presents some slight awkwardness, and some little obscurity. It seems doubtful whether in the phrase "of his own," "of" is equivalent to "from" or "concerning"; and as to the import of "his own," one inquires who or what, is or are, "his own," of which or whom the devil here speaks. Secondly, the words "for he is a liar and the father of it," sounds in the connection much like an identical proposition, and the words "of it" are but harshly developed out of the preceding "liar." In plain and idiomatic English, the reader would naturally expect something like: "For he is both himself a liar, and the father of liars, or of lying" (*αὐτός τε γὰρ ψεύστης ἐστὶ, καὶ πατὴρ τῶν ψευστῶν, or, τοῦ ψεύδους*).

To the reader of the original, the passage presents other and much graver difficulties. The obscurity of the ambiguous "of" disappears indeed, resolving itself into "from," and the plural "his own," may be "the traits which belong to him," "his inherent, or inherited characteristics." But in the original, the noun with its article naturally forms a subject instead of a predicate, and there is no good Greek scholar who, from

mere grammatical considerations, would hesitate to render the clause, "because his father also is a liar,"—or possibly, though less idiomatically, "because he is a liar, and so also is his father." Treating "his father" as a predicate, either of the two renderings of *αὐτοῦ*, "*of it*" and "of him," are about equally inadmissible, though "of it" is somewhat more tolerable. At all events, without unduly aggravating the difficulty, we cannot but feel that in the articled noun which should, by all good usage, be a subject, and in the clumsy use of *αὐτοῦ*, whether as "of it" or "of him,"—as well perhaps as in the "speaketh of his own,"—we have a complication of difficulties, and even solecisms, quite foreign to the generally idiomatic, and not unfrequently elegant style of the Apostle John. On the other hand, the rendering to which grammatical idiom almost forces us, viz., "his father also is a liar," throws us back on the unscriptural and monstrous doctrine of a father of the devil, or a *Demiurge* (*Δημιουργός*), asserting rival claims to those of God.

The only legitimate escape from these difficulties is by changing the subject of the verb *λαλῇ*, *speaketh*. Fortunately this is of easy accomplishment, and that by either of two methods: the one, a conjectural emendation of the text; the other, the application of a somewhat rare grammatical law. Neither of these is difficult; though in my opinion that which we might feel least consonant with critical usage, is in reality most probably the true one. This is the conjectural reading which for *ὅταν λαλῇ*, *when he speaketh*, or *may speak*, reads *ὃς ἂν λαλῇ*, *whoever may speak*, thus introducing in place of the devil, an indefinite human utterer of the lie. This conjectural reading, given by Lachmann, has but little external authority, and though intrinsically easy, and in

itself entirely probable, yet on the generally correct principle which rejects unnecessary, though plausible emendations of the text where grammatical rules will serve the purpose, is not without objection.

The *rule* which applies in the present case turns upon the freedom with which the Greek deals with the verb and its subject, easily passing from singular to plural, and not infrequently substituting an indefinite subject when the subject is readily supplied from the context by the reader. Thus Paul: "His letters, they say (*φησί*), says one, are weighty and powerful." So 2 Cor. 3 : 16, *ἐὰν ἐπιστρεψῃ προς Κύριον, if one shall turn to the Lord;* though the subject may indeed be supplied from the preceding *καρδίαν, heart.* Yet I think the indefinite construction preferable. So 2 Cor. 8 : 12, *εἰ γὰρ ἡ προθυμία πρόκειται, "if there be the forward mind, (one is) accepted,"* or possibly it, the mind, is accepted. So Plat. Crit., 49c., "*if (one) suffer anything whatever at their hands.*" So Aristot., Lib. I., 5. So many examples might be cited. For the grammatical authority see Kühner, Gr. Gram., sec. 238, rem. c.: "In the third pers. sing. of the verb, *αὐτός* is frequently omitted." Buttmann's Gr. Gram. (Ed. Robinson) sec. 129, 19: "The noun can be omitted, and consequently the verb stand alone when under this idea of *one, some one,* is understood either the person on whom the verb, or the action depends."

It is thus seen that the verb rendered in this way has no real difficulty. The rule is sustained by numerous examples, and fortified by the highest grammatical authorities. It produces precisely the same result as is accomplished by adopting the amended reading cited by Lachmann, and is not liable to the objection of a doubtful emendation. There is in truth not

the slightest objection to it as a grammatical law, and the present is a case in which the principle finds special applicability. The Saviour has under consideration the Jews, in their double character of liars and murderers; "Ye are," says he, "from your father the devil," *i. e.*, the father from whom ye are sprung is the devil. He was a murderer from the beginning, and he stood not in the truth, because the truth does not exist in him. The devil was the primal murderer. He began his connection with humanity by the murder of the race. The reference is not to the murder of Abel by Cain, which was but a single incidental, and as it were, sporadic effect of the grand homicidal act by which death had been introduced into the world, and had struck at the very heart of humanity. The murderous spirit then, wherever it displays itself, is the fruit of the working of the devil. When the Jews sought the life of Jesus, he charges that they were but carrying out the spirit of the primal murderer; they were but doing the deeds of their father. But the devil had begun his work of death by falsehood. He had seduced our first parents into sin by a lie directed against the Divine veracity. "Ye shall not surely die," is his declaration by which he impeached the truth of God, and plunged them into disobedience of his commands. Thus the Lord charges the Jews with inheriting from their father, the devil, the spirit of both murder and of falsehood. The devil was a murderer from the beginning; and "he stood not in the truth because the truth is not in him"; and as his murderous spirit has propagated itself in his human votaries, so their spirit of falsehood comes from the same source. "When any one speaketh falsehood, he speaketh after the manner of his kindred;" or perhaps better, "from the qualities which are inherently, or by inheritance, his,"

"for his father also is a liar." Thus the two great crimes by which the devil effected the ruin of the human race, murder and falsehood, are united in this one forcible utterance of the Lord. And assuredly the declaration that when a man—one of the members of the apostate race—utters falsehood, he speaks that which he has inherited from a lying father, seems a much weightier declaration and goes much deeper into the matter of the discourse, than that which makes the Lord to say that when Satan utters falsehood he speaks from his own; "for he is a liar, and the father of it." And in adopting this construction we relieve the sentence from several difficulties, and bring the whole discourse into unity.

I may add that the use of the subjunctive λαλῇ, *when one may speak*, is not the construction which we should expect to be applied to the devil; but it would be more appropriate to his human disciple. The conjunctive construction—*when one may be speaking*—suits naturally a human personage whom we do not assume to be always and necessarily and everywhere uttering falsehood, rather than the great primal liar whose sphere is falsehood, and regarding whom we should naturally say ὅτε λαλεῖ τὸ ψεῦδος, *when he speaks falsely*, as his natural and necessary utterance. The subjunctive then (λαλῇ), favors the human utterer, as one who may be uttering lies, not as one who does so necessarily and constantly. Nor can it be said that the Lord in introducing the human subject is passing from the natural sphere of his discourse. It is *men* with whom he here has properly to do. It is *men* whom he has charged with the intention to slay him, in the spirit of the original murderer; and it is but natural that the human *liar*, as well as the human murderer, should be also traced back to the paternity of his crime in his father, the devil. And I

may add that this is only *apparently* in a spirit of severity. In reality the language is that of extenuation. It is in some sort a lightening of the charge to throw it back on another as its original author, from whom the secondary authors of the crime have received their inspiration. None knew better than did the Lord, how deep-seated, how self-originated, how truly infernal was the motive of the Prince of Darkness.

Finally, as to this general construction I would say that it was first suggested by Bishop Middleton, author of a learned treatise on the Greek "Article." It was adopted by Scholefield and Heinsius, and after meeting various degrees of scholarly approval and rejection, is, if not rapidly, at least surely, growing into favor with modern interpreters. It has been adopted by Professor Westcott, an able and learned critic, in his "Popular Commentary on the New Testament"; and has been adopted by Professors Milligan and Moultrie, of Aberdeen and Cambridge. It is placed in the margin by the Anglo-American revisers of the New Testament, and having respect alike to the thought and the construction, I cannot but think that our scholarship will remove a very serious disfigurement from our sacred text when it follows the Greek text in making our Lord charge upon the primal murderer and the primal liar the inspiration of this spirit of homicide and falsehood.

XII.

THE HEATHEN AND THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

Romans 1 : 18.

THE Epistle to the Romans contains two very striking passages pertaining to the responsibility of the heathen world, which, taken together, seem absolutely exhaustive, and to cover the entire ground. The one is found in the first chapter, the other in the second. The one comes in directly and as the starting point of the apostle's main argument for the guilt and condemnation of the heathen ; the other comes in incidentally, as a mere side notice in connection with the discussion of the still heavier responsibility, and therefore still deeper guiltiness of the Jew. The one presents the objective, the other the subjective grounds of their criminality. The former starts from their relation to the outward world ; the latter from their inward moral constitution. The time has gone by when the child-like simplicity and innocence of the heathen were alleged as a reason for withholding missionary effort, and declining to import among them the benefits of Christianity. The wickedness and degradation inevitably attendant on paganism are universally acknowledged. Yet it can never be uninstructive to go back and see how the apostle to the Gentiles declares and explains its wickedness.

The first passage is all that I now propose to deal with—that which regards man's relations to the world without. Paul has stated, as his thesis, the need of that righteousness of

faith by which alone man can be justified before God. The necessity of this arises from that wickedness and impiety of men, which, in its unrighteous suppression of the truth, brings down upon them the wrath of God. I say *suppression* of the truth; not "*holding* it in unrighteousness," but *holding it down*,—this is what the apostle affirms,—arresting it in its natural development, and preventing it from coming out in its rightful sway over their understandings and lives.

But what is the ground of this charge? What is the truth which they suppress? The apostle proceeds to answer the question. It is the truth of God, "that which may be known of God," which is manifest among them, because God hath made it manifest to them. This means, of course, not *all* that may be known of God, the fullness of his natural and moral attributes, but the more obvious, palpable attributes of the Deity, such as most readily strike the human intelligence, and constitute in their totality a just, though by no means complete, representation of the Divine Being. The eternal power, which of course implies the eternal being, the Divine wisdom, majesty, and goodness (all that is fairly implied in the Godhead, or divinity) of the Creator—all these he has set forth before their eyes with a clearness which to refuse to recognize involves a virtual abnegation of their reason.

But how, again, are these evidences of divinity presented to them? We answer, in the material universe and in the economy of Providence. God's invisible perfections, his eternal power and divinity, are from the creation of the world clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. These attributes, invisible to sense, are discernible by the reason. What of God man cannot see with the eye of his body, he can and ought to see with the eye of his mind. Paul gives

us in the most explicit language his theory regarding the relations of the material universe to God on the one hand, and to human reason on the other. He regards that universe as in a most essential sense a manifestation of God; a mirror from which are reflected forth some of the essential perfections of his being. He recognizes again in the living soul created in the image of God, a principle that is capable of discerning him when so manifested. He hesitates not to declare man's power of ascending from the creation to the Creator. He thus vouches for the reality and legitimacy of that intuition by which human reason, witnessing certain phenomena, affirms a cause adapted and adequate to their production, and he finds in the works and ways of God sufficient authority for man's affirming a mighty, wise, and benevolent author. That Paul ever reasoned metaphysically upon this matter, we have no ground for believing. That he ever attempted any formal analysis of the soul's intuitive convictions; that he ever weighed in metaphysical balances, that principle of *causality* in man which, with inexorable sternness, binds the phenomenon to its cause, may well be doubted. He took that view of the matter which belongs to straightforward, unsophisticated common sense. He declared that to the eye of reason the heavens shine with the glory of God; that in the ear of reason the universe is vocal with the praises of its Creator. It may well be questioned, I think, whether any philosophy can go higher or deeper than this; whether this simple utterance of common sense is not the final goal of speculation in this matter; the ark to which, after sweeping with restless pinion over the billowy ocean of doubt, she will not at last return with folded wing as to her only secure resting-place. We do not believe that there is any deeper philosophy than this, that

man is so allied to God in his mental and moral constitution, bears kindled within him such a spark of the eternal reason, that where God manifests himself, whether in word or in work, man in the normal working of his reason, discerns divine footprints, and feels the obligation to adore.

And not merely to adore. Says the apostle: "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." The language implies that God in nature lays his claim upon men not only for adoration, but for gratitude. His claim may of course be partly founded upon the evidences of goodness and benevolence with which, to the eye of reason, the creation is fraught. And here we may supplement Paul's language in Romans by his oral statement to a Gentile audience in Acts 14 : 17, in which he tells them that God, however apparently withdrawn from any care of man, "has not left himself without a witness, in that he has given them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filled their hearts with food and gladness." Thus in the view of the apostle, God challenges in his providence the gratitude of his creatures, just as in his works of creative might and skill he challenges their adoration; as the wondrous mechanism of the universe suggests his eternal power and infinite majesty, so does the unceasing flow of his providential benefactions suggest his infinite goodness; as surely as the one appeals to his intelligence, the other lays its claims upon his affections.

Nature then, according to the apostle, is God's "elder Scripture," in which he reveals himself just as really, though not as fully, as in his written word. Is there any good reason for questioning this? Modern science, or rather modern scientific men, have drawn it into question, apparently in the

interests of that atheistic philosophy which seeks to banish its author from the universe, and exults with a strange and suicidal complacency, at finding itself "in a forsaken and fatherless world." Others have been disposed to deny it from regard for the honor of the Bible, that this may have no rival in its prerogative of disclosing God to man. If nature reveals God, they ask, what is the use of a second, written, revelation? The answer is easy. The revelation made in nature may be real, but not sufficient. It may give us the alphabet of religious knowledge, but not be able to induct us into its deeper mysteries. It may disclose God's natural attributes, but be far from unveiling fully his moral perfections. Besides, it is not merely knowledge that man wants, but redemption; not merely an intellectual apprehension of God, but such a disclosure of him as shall bring us to his feet in penitence and love, and bring him to us with the boon of salvation. This in fact is the main purpose of the Bible. Its chief function is not speculative, but practical. Invaluable as are its revelations to the intellect, they sink into secondary importance compared with its disclosure of God's method of mercy for a lapsed and condemned race. Its real characteristic value is that of the gradual unfolding through all of its successive stages, of the great mystery of God reconciling the world to himself through his manifestation in the flesh. Without this, the clearest revelations would be unavailing. Divine truth might blaze upon the intellect with the brilliancy of a thousand sunbeams, yet it would leave the heart in the gloom of a moral midnight. With this, the Bible towers up in unapproachable and peerless grandeur, as at once the full revealer of God, and the sole and single revealer of salvation.

One or two remarks, in closing, on the phraseology of the

passage on which I have been commenting. It is a very striking one in its rhetorical structure. But I remark only on two points. First, the word "understand" but very inadequately renders the Greek word which it professes to translate. It means to *apprehend intellectually*, to discern with the eye of the reason, in contrast with the knowledge furnished by the senses. It is the same word as that used in Hebrews 11 : 3, to inform us that by faith we understand, *i. e.*, *rationally discern*, that the worlds were framed by the word of God. It is placed directly before the words "clearly see," forming at once its antithesis and its explanation. Again, the word here rendered "Godhead," scarcely answers to the definiteness with which the Bible has taught us to conceive that term. It is an abstract formed from an adjective, signifying *divine*,—not as in Col. 2 : 9, from a *noun*, signifying *God*, but in adaptation to the vaguer knowledge imparted by nature,—and would be exactly rendered by our word *divinity*. As nearly then as this magnificently constructed passage can be rendered into English, it would, perhaps, run thus: "For his unseen attributes, from the creation of the world, being by his works rationally discerned, are distinctly seen,—or are, by his works, with the eye of the mind distinctly seen,—alike his eternal power and divinity."

XIII.

SIN AND DEATH IN ADAM AND THE RACE.

"In that all sinned."– Romans 5 : 12.

THE Bible is the microcosm of the universe; the Epistle to the Romans is the microcosm of the Bible. The Bible solves the problems of human history; the Epistle to the Romans solves the problems of the Bible. In his elucidation of the central doctrine of justification by faith the apostle sweeps over the whole range of that wonderful book, from Genesis to Revelation. Man unfallen, and man fallen; man fallen, and man restored; the condition of the Jewish world, and the condition of the Gentile; humanity without law, and humanity under law; the hopeless struggle of unaided reason and conscience against the tyranny of sin; the successful struggle of the emancipated soul carried forward to complete victory and final glorification; every heavenly doctrine and every human duty—all are swept into the current of this matchless discussion, all are embraced in the comprehensive survey, and unfolded by the energetic eloquence of this great Christian Demosthenes. He is a wise man who has fathomed the divine philosophy of the Epistle to the Romans, for he knows at once man and God; humanity in its apostasy and wretchedness, and humanity in its restoration and glorious future.

We may well believe, therefore, that beyond any other equal portion of Scripture,—the immediate discourses of our

Lord scarcely excepted,—the Epistle to the Romans is important to the biblical student. For into no other equally restricted portion are compressed so full a statement and so profound a discussion of the great truths to whose practical enforcement the apostle's life was devoted. To this character of the epistle several causes concur. In the fullness of his physical and mental energies, when his views had attained their utmost breadth and ripeness, with as yet no symptom of the decay that was to come with advancing years and incessant toil, he set himself to address to a church occupying a pre-eminently central and commanding position, a comprehensive and elaborate *résumé* of those great truths of the gospel, alike speculative and practical, which experience, reflection, and the infallible teachings of the Spirit had caused to take full possession of his soul. Fortunately too, the epistle was drawn out by no special exigencies of the Roman church. No perplexities to be resolved, no strifes to be reconciled, no alarming defection to be arrested, turned aside—as in the epistles to the Corinthians and the Galatians—the natural current of his thoughts, and prevented him from giving, as a precious heritage to the church, those general features and aspects of the gospel which stamp it with its universal and world-wide character, and which his long Christian and apostolical experience had enshrined in his soul as pre-eminently precious and important. Hence this epistle has ever been the battle-ground of religious controversy. Original and imputed sin, and personal and imputed righteousness; universal and limited atonement; necessity and free will; election and reprobation—have all fought their battles over its profound and pregnant utterances; and around these, doubtless, the contest will continue to rage till "the battle-flags are furled," and the

Sabbath of millennial harmony shall descend upon our distracted earth.

Among these utterances few have provoked more various and obstinate discussion than the paragraph containing the brief phrase which stands at the head of this article. I propose to discuss this passage especially in its bearing on the relation of the sin of the race to that of our great ancestor, and inquire into its teaching on the subject of imputation. Of course, some other topics will be incidentally discussed, while on themes which have filled volumes of controversy much must be briefly noticed or passed over altogether.

We may best approach the discussion by glancing at the previous course of thought in the epistle. The opening chapter (at verse 17) announces as its grand thesis, a justifying righteousness from God, provided for man through faith. Three successive chapters set forth the *necessity* of this righteousness by portraying that universal human wickedness which exposes the entire race to the wrath of God, and renders justification through law for Gentile and Jew alike impossible. The close of chapter third (verses 21-31) reintroduces with emphasis the remedy for the disease that has been so vividly portrayed, viz., redemption through the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; and the fourth chapter confirms this doctrine of faith from the Old Testament examples of Abraham and David. The necessity, nature, and harmony with the Scriptures of this justification having been shown, the apostle proceeds, in chapter five, to develop its results under the two grand aspects: first, of *peace* with God—an adjustment of the otherwise unappeasable strife between God and man; and, secondly, of a *hope*, assured by God's already manifested mercy (verses 5-8), of a future inheritance of bliss, and a con-

summation of grace in glory (verses 9, 11). Under the inspiration of his theme the apostle exclaims, "And not only so, but we triumph in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have *now*" (as against the coming *glory*) "received the reconciliation."

At this stage of the discussion, the reconciling to God of a race with whom he was before at enmity; the quenching of his fiery wrath; the breaking in through the rent and retreating clouds of the blessed beams of grace and glory; and all through the obedience and sacrifice of a *single* man who thus becomes a new head and starting point to the race—there naturally, and to one at home in Old Testament history, almost inevitably suggests itself a parallel between this universal deliverance and salvation—universal in potency and intrinsic adaptation—wrought by the obedience of one man, and the universal sin and wrath entailed by the disobedience of another. The two personages, Adam and Christ, stand, to the most superficial eye, in marked relation both of similarity and contrast; and their respective acts form the two great crises and turning points—the strophe and the anti-strophe—in the terribly real and significant drama of human destiny.

Here then, the apostle pauses in his direct track of thought. For no purpose of nice theological distinction, but having his mind filled with the wrath delineated in the preceding pages and the glorious reconciliation now opening through Jesus Christ, he starts spontaneously on a parallel, partly of resemblance, partly of contrast, between the two great heads of humanity, and their respective works of ruin and restoration. "For this cause, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death came through (or abroad) unto all men in that all sinned," so—it is easy to fill

out the parallel; the corresponding members of the comparison readily suggest themselves—"so through one man righteousness entered into the world, and life by righteousness," or something to that effect. But the phrase, "in that all sinned," suggesting (as at 2 : 14) the seeming paradox of sin in the absence of law, led the apostle to leave his sentence unfinished, and turning away to certain illustrative ideas, to abandon the formal completion of his parallel, and return to it only in a modified form, first at verse 14, "who is type of him that was to come," the future Adam; and again—after introducing the points of *contrast*—more fully and formally at verse 18. I stop now at the brief clause on which I have undertaken to comment, and which becomes the pivot of my discussion—"in that all have sinned."

First, briefly, in regard to the translation. Some have rendered it "in *whom* all sinned," referring the relative "whom" back to *Adam* as its antecedent. But this construction is in reference to the import of the preposition intolerably harsh, and by the remoteness of the pronoun from the assumed antecedent, grammatically impossible. Another construction refers the relative back to "death" (*θάνατος*), as its antecedent, "on condition of which all sinned," a construction also harsh, and required by no exigencies of the passage. Calvin and Melancthon convert "in that all sinned" into "in that all were sinners," in the sense of "inherited a propagated evil nature." Whatever the truth or falseness of the doctrine, the translation is certainly erroneous, for only the loosest philology could turn the absolute aorist "sinned" (or possibly "had sinned") into "were" (by inheritance) "sinners." Grotius' explanation "to pay the penalty of sin" (*luere pœnas*) is, if possible, still less defensible.

The only natural and probable rendering makes ἐφ' ᾧ equivalent to ἐπὶ τοῦτῳ ὅτι, and renders, with our English version, *in that*, nearly, *because that*, or possibly, *under the condition that*. Thus the exactest rendering of the phrase is "in that all sinned," referring most naturally to some single phrase to which the term applies. I add that while the Greek aorist means in itself simply "sinned," as an absolutely past act, Greek usage might employ it of an act *relatively* past—*i. e.*, of an act *prior* to the time expressed by the accompanying verb, where English idiom would require the pluperfect. This is especially true when the aorist is, as here, dependent on a relative. The phrase might, therefore, if the connection required it, be rendered, "in that all had sinned." This meaning never lies in the tense, but only in the connection, and can be admitted, therefore, only as an exigency of the context. Take in illustration (with the relative) Matthew 27 : 60, "placed in his sepulchre which he had hewed" (Greek ἐλατόμησεν, literally, he hewed). So (without a preceding relative) Matthew 14 : 3, ἔδησεν, *had bound;* literally "bound," but referring to a relatively prior act. So much for the reading of the passage; let us proceed to its interpretation.

Aside from the above-mentioned interpretations of Calvin and Grotius (which need not detain us), we may resolve the interpretations of the passage chiefly into the three following:

I. They sinned *putatively*, or by imputation, in having the transgression of Adam directly reckoned to them, or passed over to their account by virtue of a covenant relation.

II. They sinned *virtually*, in that by their natural constitution they were *in* Adam, and so fell with him.

III. They sinned *personally* and *individually*, in that through and in consequence of the sin of Adam, sin and its

penalty, death, originating with him, passed through the race, involving every member of it in the guilt and penalty of *personal transgression.*

Is the doctrine then that of constructive or imputed sin, through Adam's federal or covenant headship to the race, or that of *virtual* sin through Adam's organic and vital headship of the race, or that of actual and personal sin of every member of the race in *consequence* of his descent from a sinning and depraved ancestor, and his vital and essential relationship to him?

The natural interpretation which an unbiassed reader, who was not seeking proof of a dogma, would put upon the phrase, would seem to be the latter. Up to this point he has found nothing in the epistle that would suggest any other sense than that which lies on the face of the words, viz., the *actual sin,* accompanying and conditioning the *actual death* of every man. He might, indeed, conceive a very material difference between the position of Adam and that of his descendants; his sin may, by a divine constitution, stand in a vital and causative relation to the sins of all his posterity; but this would in no way interfere with the apostle's assertion of universal individual sin, and of universal death as its invariable concomitant. The statement would seem to be that as sin and death came into the world through Adam, so together they went abroad and struck all his descendants, the *sin* being in each case as actual and personal as was the *death.* Yet we need not say that the most obvious explanation of a passage is not always the true one. Latent and subtle considerations clinging about its roots sometimes compel us to reject the meaning which lies upon its face. Are there such considerations here? What reasons here present themselves that re-

quire us to substitute for the personal sin which the apostle seems to affirm, and upon which he has hitherto dwelt with solemn emphasis, an imputed or constructive sinning in the transgression of their great progenitor? If I mistake not, the reasons alleged by the advocates of the putative doctrine are reducible substantially to three.

1. The imputation doctrine, they allege, is required by the strictness of the parallel. The apostle, it is claimed, having set forth the wickedness and ruin of mankind, and their recovery through Christ, now proceeds to illustrate the *method* of this recovery through the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer, and in so doing places him as the formal counterpart and antitype of Adam in whom was wrought their ruin. The parallel, therefore, must be substantially exact. But the spiritual seed of the second Adam are saved, not by their personal, but by his imputed righteousness; the natural seed, therefore, of the first Adam must, in like manner, be lost, not by their personal, but by his imputed sin. If the death is in the one case the product of actual sin, and the life in the other the product of imputed righteousness, the comparison limps, and the reasoning is inconsequent. Christ stands in covenant relation to his people; he suffered and died as their representative; his sufferings inure to their benefit, and the righteousness which he wrought out is passed over to their account. The converse of this must hold in the case of Adam. He must stand as the federal head and representative of the race; not merely as its *organic* head, so that the results of his act pass to his descendants by natural propagation, but as a *covenant* head, so that his acts are *constructively* theirs; and so that, independently of what they are and do, personally, as they take their places on the stage of action, they are *already*,

in the purpose of omniscience, charged with the virtual guilt of their head and representative.

2. A corroboration of this view its advocates find in the immediately following language: "For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law." This language can have no force, it is claimed, except as a proof that the sin for which men suffered death was the sin of Adam. If, before the law—in the interval, that is, between the law of Paradise and the law of Sinai—sin was actually in the world,—and yet sin is not reckoned or imputed in the absence of law,—then the only sin which was the ground of the death of men must have been the sin of Adam imputed to his posterity; and the purpose of the apostle here is to prove the doctrine of imputed sin in order to establish and make good his parallel between Adam and Christ.

3. Still a third reason for the doctrine is found in the fact that death reigns over a large portion of the race who have never been implicated in personal sin, and cannot, therefore, be for that reason subject to death. Infants do not sin, and yet infants die. To this class many commentators, and among them Dr. Hodge, refer the expression of verse 14: "Who did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression." And, at all events, as the sufferings and death of infants, and perhaps of idiots, cannot be chargeable on their personal sinfulness, they can come only through the transferred criminality of the covenant head of the race.

These reasons seem plausible, and at first view, perhaps convincing. Let us see if they will bear the test of careful examination.

The first of the three turns on the parallel run by the apostle between Adam and Christ, and finds in the necessary

correspondence of the two terms of the parallel, an argument for imputed sin. The righteousness of Christ, it argues, is imputed to his spiritual seed unto life. The sin of Adam, therefore, must be imputed to his natural seed unto death. But can this reasoning be regarded as conclusive or really weighty? Does it not push the parallel beyond its real purpose? It seems quite gratuitous to assume that this purpose extends to the precise *mode of operation* of the acts of the two personages who are contrasted; to the precise *way and manner* in which their acts affected their respective subjects. The broad and general terms of the parallel forbid such a supposition. The obvious purpose of the introduction of the parallel equally forbids it. We have simply Adam and Christ at the head of two lines of development; at the source and fountain head of two grand streams of influence, the one disobedience of Adam bringing in upon the race evil and ruin, the one obedience of Christ originating over against it righteousness and life. That the precise *rationale* of the two systems was in the apostle's mind to be exhibited, there seems no manner of evidence. It seems to me that the character of the entire passage, extending from verse 12 to the end of the chapter, is totally misconceived when regarded in the light of a piece of strictly dogmatical teaching. That it is fraught with great and superlatively important truths follows from its being a product of the profound and divinely inspired intellect of the apostle. But any subtle refining on the *way* in which the agency of either Adam or Christ has produced its effects, seems entirely out of keeping with the general character of the passage. Regarded in its just light, it is more nearly an outburst of enthusiastic triumph over the contemplation of the ruin entailed upon humanity by

the first Adam gloriously retrieved by the Second. It is a sort of epinician hymn, a grand lyrical chant; the jubilant exultation of humanity, bursting from the lips of that great apostle who, more widely than any other living man, had surveyed the extent and fathomed the depth of the desolation, and more zealously and successfully than any other had labored to retrieve it. Look at the position of the passage, and it will be found wholly alien to the niceties of theological detail. The apostle has drawn out in dark and fearful lines the picture of human wickedness and ruin. Over against that picture he has portrayed briefly, but vividly, redemption with its present reconcilement and its prospective glory; and now, as one who has emerged from a perilous wilderness into a scene of safety and beauty, he turns back to recall the horrors he has escaped, and to contrast the blessed agency that has wrought his deliverance with the act and author of his ruin.

This, I am satisfied, presents the only right point of view from which to estimate our passage. It is, in a much higher degree, emotional than doctrinal, though, like all the apostle's emotional utterances, pervaded by the weightiest truth. What, we may ask, more natural and more likely to be formed than such a contrast at this stage of the discussion?

We have traced briefly the course of that discussion. The earth, to the apostle's anointed eye, reeking with wickedness; the heavens black with wrath. The picture has no softening hues, it is one of unrelieved and terrible blackness; but there bursts on the scene a divine light. The clouds disperse, the lightnings cease, and peace and hope succeed to enmity and despair. How natural now to illustrate and enhance the

greatness of the deliverance and the Deliverer, by bringing them into parallel with the extent and the author of the ruin! And to the student of the Hebrew Scriptures the comparison was inevitable. The analogy of the two cases was too remarkable to escape notice, and in no more effective way could the apostle give vent to his struggling emotions, and heighten his readers' conceptions both of the richness of the benefit and their indebtedness to its author. His eye has swept over the ages of human sin, and seen its thousand widening lines converge in the single transgression of Adam. It sweeps over the equally wide range and still deeper potencies of redemption, and sees them all converge in the single obedience of Christ. How natural then the parallel, without assuming any specific doctrinal purpose or any theological subtleties alien to its general spirit! I say alien to its spirit, for the mode of carrying out the parallel indicates no distinctive doctrinal purpose. The expressions are broad and general, and the entire exigencies of the passage are met by assuming simply a *causative* relation between the disobedience of Adam and the obedience of Christ on the one hand, and their respective results in ruin and deliverance on the other. There is not an expression which a rejecter of the form of imputation supposed to be here taught need hesitate to employ, or which would stumble any believer in the general fact that the transgression of Adam brought sin and death into the world, and entailed them upon the race. The parallel is carried out rather rhetorically than in strict logical statement. The resemblance is briefly hurried over, while in delineating the contrast, the *advantage* which the dispensation of life has over the dispensation of death, the writer lingers over the topic, kaleidoscopically throwing out essentially the same

thought in different forms (verses 15–18), as if struggling to express the transcendent richness of the gospel.

There is no need then that the comparison creep on all fours. That Adam and Christ stand in like general relation meets abundantly the apostle's purpose. Believers receive salvation through Christ's righteousness, yet it by no means follows that we share the consequences of Adam's sin in precisely *the same way*. The *consequences* themselves, with the fact of their relation to Adam, is all that is necessarily implied. That, standing at the head of the race, his act determined its character and destiny; that he *sinned*, and in that sin opened the flood-gates of a tide of death that has swept over all his posterity; that, in turn, the sacrifice of our Lord in voluntary obedience opened an equally wide door of life and salvation, and one never to be closed; that in the blood of Calvary has welled up a healing current deeper, broader, mightier than the desolating stream which has issued from Eden—these great facts embrace substantially the teaching of our passage.

And even were a closer correspondence demanded, is it clear that the advantage would be with the advocates of imputation. Following the analogy of Romans 4: 9, we should say not that it is Christ's righteousness, but the believer's *faith*, that is imputed to him for righteousness. But leaving this aside, and granting imputation (*λογίζεσθαι, reckoning*) something more than a mere *figurative* statement of our justification through Christ, none can claim that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer as a *substitute for*, and dispensation from his own personal righteousness. Into the work of Christ he must enter with personal sympathy and personal appropriation, making his own the spirit of his Lord's sacrifice, and reflecting in his own character his holiness. God reckons

righteousness to no one who is not in some degree personally righteous, and, so far as *it is* imputed, it is a righteousness rather *for Christ's sake*, than Christ's own proper righteousness. But at all events, there can, in the nature of the case, be no perfect parallel between the two—between the work of ruin wrought humanly by a man, and the work of restoration wrought preternaturally through the co-working of the human with the divine. It would be almost blasphemy—it is certainly unwarrantable—to reduce them to precisely the same measure, and force them into the same categories. I think it safe to say that any precise identification of the *manner* in which Adam's and Christ's agency wrought upon the world is not at all in the apostle's thought.

2. The second argument for imputation is found in the words, "Until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not reckoned where there is no law." From this it is urged that the sin which existed during the ante-legal period could have been no other than the imputed sin of Adam. But is this a legitimate inference? Do not the writings of the apostle necessitate a very different conclusion? If previously to the Mosaic law, sin was in the world, and yet sin is not reckoned in the absence of law, what is the conclusion? That the absence of law was apparent rather than real, relative rather than absolute; that though the positive law of Paradise had ceased, and that of Sinai had not been given, yet enough of essential law remained among men to bring upon them accountability and, if violated, condemnation. This explanation has the advantage of harmonizing both with the unquestionable facts, and with the prior teaching of the apostle. In chapter one of our epistle he tells us that God had made in the creation such a revelation of his power and divinity as to leave the Gentiles,

who ignored them, without excuse. In the second chapter he tells us that they who sin without law will perish without law, and presently, to explain how this may be, he tells us that Gentiles who have not a formal law have the substance of the law (its ἔργον in distinction from its γράμμα) written on their inner nature, to whose demands their conscience bears perpetual testimony, and before which their moral estimates (λογισμοί) are engaged in perpetual processes of accusation and defense. Verses fourteen and fifteen of this second chapter are thus a parenthetical *aside,* to show how, by their possession of an inner law of conscience, the Gentiles can be brought into the category of those who will be visited with the impartial sentence of the law. Such is the clear testimony of the apostle in the opening chapters of the epistle. He has brought forward distinctly the light of nature and the law of conscience as the ground of that terrible arraignment which he has made of the Gentile world for the foulest wickedness. And is it conceivable that he has now directly crossed the track of those reiterated and solemn utterances? Can he so soon have forgotten the long catalogue of personal crimes branded into his page with a pen of iron, and his own clear explanations of this personal criminality, as now to tell us that in the long inter-legal period between Paradise and Sinai, the sin that was in the world was only the imputed transgression of the father of the race? Which then, is the more natural way of filling out the elliptical argument: "Until the positive law of Sinai, sin was in the world; but sin is not reckoned in the absence of law, therefore the sin was exclusively the sin of Adam?" Or thus: "Until the positive law of Sinai, sin was in the world; but sin is not reckoned in the absence of law; therefore even before that positive law there was a law of nature and con-

science, which men could and did violate, and in standing proof of which we behold during all this period the sovereign sway of death?" Which better harmonizes both with the facts and with the explicitly recorded doctrine of the apostle?

But thus much granting the correctness of this rendering. Of that, however, I greatly doubt, and incline to one that seems to me more in accordance both with the probable import of the word and the scope of the apostle. The word here rendered *reckon* or *impute*, is not the same precisely as that elsewhere so rendered, viz., λογίζεσθαι. It is both for classic and New Testament use nearly an ἅπαξ λεγόμενον,—*a reckoning once for all*—(viz., ἐλλογεῖσθαι or ἐλλογᾶσθαι), and may, I think, with great probability, be rendered *be (formally) set to the account of, be brought into strict reckoning.* Thus the idea is changed from this, that in the absolute absence of law there is an absolute non-imputation of sin,—an idea, indeed, perfectly Pauline,—to another equally Pauline, viz., that in the relative absence of the law, sin is not held to its full and rigid accountability. Thus it corresponds with the apostle's declaration to the Athenians (Acts 17) of God's overlooking (ὑπεριδών, "*winking* at") the times of the world's ignorance, and also in this very epistle, with the declaration of that "forbearance (ἀνοχή, *holding back*) of God" which has *passed by* the sins of former ages. (3 : 25, 26.)

This meaning, moreover, seems to fall into harmony with the context, and to shed a better light upon it than does the other, though this in itself is equally unexceptionable. Let us glance at the course of thought: "Death passed through," says the apostle, "unto all men, in that all sinned." Instead of finishing his parallel the writer (for nearly precisely the same reason as at chapter 2 : 13) checks himself. To a Jew,

to whom the legislation of Sinai was a thing so intensely and tremendously real, the condition of nations without law would be a sore puzzle. How the nations without law could stand on the same general platform of moral accountability with the favored possessor of law he would find it difficult to understand. Hence at chapter 2, when the apostle has declared that the "doers of law will be justified," he turns aside for a moment to show *how* the Gentiles could be brought into the class to whom this criterion of judgment should be applied. So here the declaration that "all sinned" in connection with the prevalence of death, suggests if it does not demand, explanation. The writer, therefore, breaks off abruptly, adding, "For until law sin was in the world," viz., as the fruit and manifestation of the general depravity; as the violation of that inherent moral law from which none can escape; and although during this inter-legal period less aggravated in dye, and naturally held to less rigid accountability, and brought to less strict reckoning, yet there was during this period, one standing judgment upon it, viz., the fact and sovereign sway of death. Other judgments might be held in abeyance; but what had been the original and specific penalty of sin was inflicted with unrelaxed vigor. Death held regal sway (ἐβασίλευσεν) from Adam to Moses, not touching the race sporadically, not asserting a disputed and doubtful sway, but holding high carnival, *reigning* even over all the generations which, while they sinned, did not, like Adam, sin in the face of positive enactment.

Such, I think, to be the scope of this very condensed passage. The apostle has to touch the moral history of humanity under its two conditions, as without law and under law. In the former state sin was in the world, but rather, com-

paratively speaking, as *sin* than as *transgression;* rather as the spontaneous, irrepressible, half-unconscious outflowing of inherited and inherent depravity, than as conscious, voluntary, deliberate violation of law. Hence, during this period, the judgments of God comparatively slumber; he deals with its developments tenderly and indulgently. Yet evidences both of the ruin and of God's displeasure are not wanting. Death, its original companion and penalty still, continues, and by his awful and exceptionless ravages attests the virulence of the evil even in its most mitigated form. Under this aspect of the case, considering human sin under its purely *natural* manifestation, the apostle deals with the evil and the remedy till he reaches the climax of his powers of portraiture (verse 18). He then advances to the next stage of development: "But law came in alongside (*παρά*) that the trespass might be heightened." The law was introduced in order to deepen sin into transgression; to aggravate and bring to a crisis the moral disease of humanity; and by showing the virulence and obstinacy of the disease to prepare the way for the remedy. The law was thus an advancing stage of preparation for the gospel. It was not promulgated with the expectation that it would be obeyed, nor, if we may so speak, *in order that* it might be obeyed. It was *added* (*προσετέθη*) in the interest (*χάριν*) of transgressions (Gal. 3 : 19). It was, therefore, by a merciful synchronism that the moral and the ritual code were introduced together; the one telling of human guilt, the other of a divine redemption; the one proclaiming the need, the other the possibility, of salvation; the one fulminating wrath, the other whispering pardon. We may think slightingly of Jewish ritualism, but it was humanity's blessed hope and solace in the long interval

between Moses and Christ. Happy that the lightnings which blazed from Sinai were partially quenched if but in the blood of a symbolical expiation!

But to return from this digression. I add that the phrase "over them that did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression," makes against the doctrine of imputation. The very statement that they did not sin "after the likeness of Adam's transgression"—*i. e.*, under some special form or conditions, yet implies that they *did sin*, though in a different way. What *was* that way we can not reasonably doubt. Sinning after the likeness of Adam's transgression was sinning in violation of express and positive law; and thus the phrase simply describes those who sinned during the inter-legal period. The word "even" or "also" (*καί*) may either contrast that portion of Adam's descendants who *never* enjoyed positive law with such as from time to time received special divine communications, or contrast the race as a whole, regarded as without law, with Adam, making no account of special cases of exception. The argument is, in either case, the same, though I think the latter view, which takes the race collectively, the more probable. At all events, there is no ground whatever for supposing a reference to infants; and the very declaration that the class referred to did not sin in a particular way, carries with it the nearly necessary implication that they *did sin*.

The argument then for imputation from the phrase, "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law," falls to the ground. It is discount-enanced by the direct assertion that sin *was* in the world, with nothing to show that it means other than what it says; by the implication of their sinning contained in the fact of

their not sinning in a particular manner; by the tenor of the reasoning; by the apostle's previous teaching that the Gentiles possessed and violated the twofold law of nature and of conscience (1 : 18–22; 2 : 14, 15), and, I may add, by the whole tenor of his previous doctrine. If there is any one truth which he has illustrated with prominent fullness and which shines out with noonday clearness on the preceding pages of the epistle, it is the wrath of God resting upon man for his *actual* and *universal wickedness*. From the majestic opening, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," down to the solemn closing of the case with the arraignment of "all the world" as "guilty before God," the apostle has never hesitated, never wavered in his indictment of humanity for unprovoked and inexcusable sin. No shadow of intimation that the absence of law placed man beyond the imputation of personal guilt. No hint that for anything other than his personal criminality he stands obnoxious to the wrath of heaven. The Gentile has willfully suppressed the truth; has refused his homage to the divinity that shines in creation and providence; and from this starting point of impiety has plunged into beastly and abominable vices, being filled with unrighteousness, maliciousness, covetousness, and so on through a catalogue of crimes of which humanity shudders at the recital. Nowhere one moment's hesitation about the reality, the malignity, the damning desert of personal sin! And now are we to believe that he turns around and tells us that the world was suffering only or mainly from imputed and constructive guilt? Has such a new light suddenly dawned upon the apostle, has he so completely forgotten the reiterated testimony of the preceding pages, that he shrinks

from the simple declaration that "all sinned," and finds it necessary to sustain the charge by laying to their door the crime of a representative progenitor? Never was uttered a more palpable absurdity; never was there a more complete anti-climax than this final reducing of these accumulated charges of human wickedness to a mere constructive liability for the single trespass of Adam. Of course no man will consistently carry out so absurd a proposition. None will deny that in the absence of law men are actual, as well as constructive, sinners. They will, in fact, only claim that men are subject to penal sufferings which flow from their federal connection with Adam. Yet they then surrender the doctrine in question as matter of history, holding it merely as a tenet of theological belief.

And read, for a moment, in the light of history this doctrine of mere imputed sin. Take the story of Cain—the drama of post-paradisaic life, opening with envy, hate, murder, and falsehood; the Deluge, when the earth was filled with violence, and all flesh had corrupted its way until its reeking iniquities demanded that terrible purgation; Sodom and Gomorrah buried by their loathsome vices under a storm of fire and brimstone; Pharaoh hardening his heart until God plunged him and his host into the abyss of waters; the Canaanites swept away for their ripened iniquities before invading Israel—and then tell us that during this long interregnum of law personal sin was not, and could not be, justly imputed, and that irresponsible humanity was simply expiating the guilt of the primal transgression!

But do not facts such as I have mentioned, the examples of the Deluge, of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of Pharaoh, make against my own interpretation of the ἐλλογεῖται, and

prove that God *did* watch over and bring the sins of men to a terrible reckoning? I answer that all such statements must be taken as only relative. Comparatively speaking, human sin is but light in the absence of enacted law. Comparatively speaking, theft, falsehood, fornication, are—the Old Testament being witness—but venial crimes, apart from express Divine prohibition. And, comparatively speaking, the visitations of God's wrath on crimes so committed are but slight and occasional. Now and then the heavens mutter with suppressed and half-sleeping vengeance; now and then a fierce local and transient eruption testifies to the wrath that lies treasured below. But, as a rule, the times of ignorance God "winks at" (ὑπερορᾷ, *overlooks*), and leaves only inexorable and all-embracing death as the abiding evidence of existing wrath and pledge of a coming judgment.

3. A third reason assigned for the interpretation we are examining is the case of infants. Infants do not sin, yet infants die; their death, therefore, along with whatever other evils they suffer, must be from the imputation of the sin of Adam. Now that infants suffer and die *on account* of the sin of Adam is just as indisputable as that the sins and death of all men are attributable to this same origin. Yet it does not thence necessarily follow that infants suffer and die on account of the *imputing* to them of their great ancestor's transgression. Their *organic* connection with Adam may furnish a satisfactory explanation of the facts. And the case of infants needs here, no more than elsewhere, any separate consideration. They are bound up with the race; they partake its character and destinies. They have within them that seed of depravity which only needs scope to germinate and ripen into sin. They belong to a stock which, not merely by a con-

structive participation in a single act, but far more by an actual vitiation derived from an organic connection with it, rests under the penal curse of death. As, then, the apostle, in all his previous discussion, while charging men with the guilt of sin, needed to make no special reference to infants, so no such reference is needed here. With whatever is exceptional in the case of infants, God is abundantly competent to deal, and the practical discussion of the facts that lie within the sphere of human consciousness and responsibility need not be embarrassed by problems that lie beyond human solution.

Besides, it should be remembered that if the death of infants has its hard and penal, it has also its gracious side. If it may be looked upon as the penalty of inherited depravity, it must also be recognized as an arrest of the development of that depravity into actual transgression. And here we may find logical assurance of infant salvation. Death, with its attendant evils, is the penalty of sin—primarily and properly of actual sin. If, therefore, in the case of a race placed under an economy of mercy, God has selected a certain portion on whom the penalty is visited without their having participated in the actual sin which originally incurred it, we may fairly infer that the penalty itself loses in their case its proper character, and is transmuted into a blessing. When by providential interference God arrests the development of the innate germ of evil, and prevents it from advancing into conscious sin, we may take for granted that it is in mercy and not in wrath; that the penalty itself is correspondingly modified; and that death to the infant, as well as to the believer, is shorn of its terrors, and becomes a minister of good. It is a part, and no unimportant part, of that broad economy by which God is counteracting and hemming in the

ravages of the curse. There thus became, we may believe, two classes to whom belongs, without exception, the kingdom of heaven; the one that of those who accept in intelligent faith the gracious proffer of redemption; the other that vast multitude who open a feeble eye upon the light and sorrows of earth, and at once exchange their infant wail for the glad harmonies of heaven. We may regard this belief as no mere matter of affectionate hope or groundless conjecture. Though incapable of strict proof, it seems rational to believe that where the natural relation between the cause and the effect, between sin and death, has been broken, and the cause has not been allowed its normal action, the penalty also loses its proper character and death, with the infant as with the believer, and in both cases, through the blood of Christ, is disarmed of its sting.

The bearing of the phrase, "who sinned not after the similitude of Adam's transgression," has been already considered. The opinion that it has any direct reference to infants is scarcely deserving of serious refutation. It so exactly describes the class that sinned without positive law, and so plainly intimates that the very class referred to did sin, that any reference to infants seems entirely out of the question, and except through dogmatic exigencies would scarcely be thought of for a moment.

4. Still a fourth argument, however, for the imputation doctrine is adduced by Meyer, viz., the Apostle Paul's declaration in 1 Cor. 15 : 22, that "in Adam all die"; inasmuch as consistency requires that if we hold that all die in Adam, we must, in like manner, maintain that in Adam all sin. In any proper sense of the expression this may be readily conceded. But surely the apostle does not mean to affirm

that the death of Adam was *imputed* to his descendants, so that their death is any less actual and real than his own. Nor, I believe, does the apostle mean *here* that the death of Adam was the virtual death of his descendants—however true this may be—so that when he died it was *as if* the race died. Nor certainly can he mean that the death of Adam was the *cause* of death to his posterity, so that they die by reason of his death. "In Adam all die" seems simply a brief, emphatic declaration that the sin of Adam brought death upon the race; we all die in Adam only as his transgression subjected his posterity, along with himself, to the death which was its penalty. Properly interpreted, the passage has nothing whatever to do with imputation. It simply tells us that as we owe to one man our death, so to one man we owe also our resurrection.

II. Dismissing then as alien to the passage, the doctrine of imputed sin, what shall we say of the interpretation which makes it affirm that all men sinned in Adam, not putatively and by construction, but *virtually and essentially;* not by virtue of a mere federal or covenant, but of an organic, relation between Adam and his posterity? Mankind, this doctrine alleges, sinned in Adam, because Adam was mankind. The human race lay in the loins of their great progenitor, and shared in his transgression, as Levi in the loins of Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Thus Adam's obedience, while he obeyed, was the obedience of the race; his trespass, when he fell, was the trespass of the race. In his crime all crimes were potentially contained. In his fall the stream of humanity was poisoned at the fountain head. The vitiated source could send forth only impure waters; the corrupted tree could bear only bitter fruit.

This doctrine of our relation to Adam, and this *rationale* of man's universal depravity, seems to be the only right one. Nothing less than such a vital connection with Adam—such a physiological law by which the characteristics of Adam, both physical and moral, were propagated to his descendants —can explain the absolute and exceptionless prevalence of moral evil among men; the remorseless and inexorable tenacity with which the taint of sin has clung to all forms and stages of human development, making each individual stain of guilt but a rill from a bottomless and shoreless ocean. Pelagianism, which makes every man substantially his own Adam, and puts human nature with every individual on a fresh trial; the doctrine that sin is a casual act and not a fixed nature, a "local malady" and not a "constitutional taint," and can be dealt with by any process less radical than a divine regeneration, is pitiably superficial and blind to the formidableness of our great foe. Leviathan laughs at the impotent arrows that rebound from his iron scales; the swelling Atlantic scoffs at the broom which would sweep back its wrathful billows; but infinitely more sin mocks at the hostile weapon that is not tempered with a divine energy, and drawn from the armory of heaven.

But this doctrine, true and just in itself, is yet not the doctrine of our passage. That Paul held such a view of our connection with Adam, and that it really underlies his conceptions of the prevalence of evil, we may well believe. But there seems no evidence that he intends to propound it here. He is not here concerning himself with any theory of the *way* in which our sinfulness is derived from Adam. The dreadful *fact* of that sinfulness is that with which he has all along been dealing, and there is no reason for supposing that he departs

from it here. The single thought here added is that this sinfulness is entailed upon us by the act of Adam—*how* entailed it does not lie within his purpose to declare. That he is still speaking of personal sin is shown by the words, "for until the law sin was in the world," which can have no other natural application than to sin existing in the individual members of the race.

III. The only right answer then to the question, "*How* did all sin"? is that they sinned *personally and individually.* This is the single point of view under which, previously or subsequently, the apostle contemplates sin, and nothing either in the passage or the context implies its relinquishment here. The epistle deals everywhere with the broad, obvious facts of man's actual condition. It takes the phases of human guilt and wickedness that are palpable to observation. Pausing at one point for a moment (2 : 14, 15) to explain how the existence of sin was compatible with the absence of positive law, it pursues its steady course of unwavering affirmation of universal human wickedness. "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become arraignable before God." "For all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God." In this latter passage all commentators understand the words of personal sin, yet no objection can be urged against this understanding in the fifth chapter that does not apply equally in the third If Paul could affirm universal sinning without regard to the sinning by exceptional cases of infants and idiots in the third chapter, he can do so equally in the fifth, and in neither does any thought of these classes limit, or need to limit, the universality of his charge. Whatever is exceptional in these cases will be dealt with excep-

tionally, and lies outside of that vast world of conscious, responsible, guilty men with whom he is dealing. We assume then in our passage, the natural, unforced interpretation of the language; what the apostle has not hesitated elsewhere to affirm or imply; what, in fact, he has been elaborately demonstrating, that all men are involved in the guilt of personal transgression, which subjects them to the wrath of God, he has not hesitated to declare here. The mere introduction of the parallel between Adam and Christ, as the introducers respectively of the two opposite dispensations of life and death —a parallel which would force itself on the mind of one familiar with the narrative of the fall—does not imply in the apostle any new view regarding the personal guiltiness of the race.

But we may be asked, Does the apostle intend to affirm precisely the *same* relation between individual sin and death in the *posterity* of Adam as between the transgression and its penalty in the head of the race? In other words, does not the interpreting of our passage of individual sin really make every man virtually his own Adam, in that by his own sin he works out his own death? I answer, that we cannot, of course, doubt the peculiar and special significance of the sin of Adam and its causative relation to that of all succeeding generations. In Adam we all die, because in bringing death upon himself he brought death upon all his posterity; he incurred the dreadful penalty not only for himself but for the race. But this is not the whole of it. Not only did he incur for his posterity the certainty of death, but the certainty of sin. His act made their sinning as inevitable as their dying. And while the sinful acts of his descendants have no such sweeping effect and extraordinary significance as did his;

while they are not like his, critical and determinative of the destiny of a race, but rather portions of an already determined line and process of development, they are in each individual case as naturally and necessarily connected with the individual doom of death as was the trespass of Adam with the general doom of the race. Universal man must die; but also universal man must sin; therefore the apostle's added phrase, "in that all sinned," is necessary to complete his statement. Otherwise we should have in Adam, indeed, sin and death appearing together, but in his posterity only one of the two factors; the presence of the effect without the presence of the cause, or rather, the presence of one of the two results of Adam's trespass without the equally necessary presence of the other. It would seem, in that case, that death might have made the entire circuit of the race without a co-extensive prevalence of sin. The added clause, "in that all sinned," fills out the picture. It shows us sin and death entering in fearful brotherhood through the opened door of the primal transgression, getting a foothold in humanity, and thenceforward doing in inseparable fellowship their ruthless work upon the race. Adam's sin determined indeed the doom of death for all mankind; but it equally determined for all mankind the inheritance of depravity and the fact of transgression, and their inseparableness in the issue is but the result of their causal conjunction in the beginning.

XIV.

ACCURSED FROM CHRIST.

Romans 9 : 3.

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

THE Apostle Paul had touched the loftiest height of his glowing rhetoric in the eighth of Romans. Rapidly he had swept the keys of its sublime harmonies. By the way of the sonship and inheritance of the Christian, and the throes of a groaning and yet not hopeless creation, and the beneficent mission of "all things," he had reached the cloudless altitude of his ringing challenge, "Who shall separate?" and his triumphant assurance, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

From this swelling tide of rapture the spirit of the apostle passes, at the close of chapter eight, to the relations which his own people have sustained to the wondrous drama of redemption. The glorious promise that illumined the dawn of their history, and the wretched realization that has darkened its present, rises

before him in their deepest contrasts of glory and of shame. In reverting to these strikingly contrasted scenes of his country's fortunes, his language still breathes the impassioned fervor with which that sublime contemplation has inspired it. He descends from his height of Christian rapture on a flood-tide of patriotic sympathy. "I speak," he exclaims, "the truth in Christ; I utter no falsehood; my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart." Such an utterance following closely on the heels of a strain of such sublime majesty is too weighty and emphatic to lead nowhere, as in our English Scriptures it assuredly does, except to a sentiment which has ever been repugnant to the Christian consciousness—which that consciousness has found it hard to reconcile alike with the apostle's absolute devotion to the service of his Master, and his exulting conviction of inseparableness from the love of God in Christ Jesus his Lord. Did the Apostle Paul, we involuntarily ask ourselves, and especially did he just now, when his rapt spirit was revelling in the fullness of that Christian hope and confidence whose swelling tide had borne him up to this highest heaven of rapture, did he just now wish, or say that he could wish, that under any circumstances, or for any cause he might himself be accursed from Christ? By what law of mental action could even a *quasi* willingness to be for any conceivable reason accursed from that Saviour from whom his rapt spirit sees that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, can dissever him, just now suggest itself to his mind? Can one find in the annals of literature an utterance more incongruous with its fellows, or more inopportune than this? Can we conceive a place in which it would be less looked for or less welcome?

And admitting that the apostle could in any form express a *quasi* willingness to forego for the benefit of his people the joys of his own eternal union with the Saviour, to relinquish all that he saw in the infinite merits of the death and exaltation of Jesus, could he express that willingness in such a form? Could he have expressed it in a way which would imply that the sacrifice if submitted to would be of any avail? That the curse which he was ready to invoke upon his own head for the sake of his people, would reach its end? Would the infinite reluctance, the sense of utter and irreparable loss to himself, which would accompany such an act of devotion, not dictate some other language than that of wishing himself accursed from Christ? Would not his language be rather that of reluctant acquiescence in the agonies of separation from the Lord whom he loves, if such a sacrifice could purchase the salvation of his people?

But now by what right do we question the fittingness of this alleged apostolic utterance? The question remains not whether the apostle could in our view invoke with propriety such anathema from his Lord, but whether he *did* utter it. Who, we are asked, shall decide on the lengths to which the zeal of the emancipated soul may carry it? May there not be depths in the apostle's devotion to his brethren, which our shallow benevolence is unable to fathom? It is a question not of our duller reasoning over what the apostle might say, but of what he *did* say as he contemplated this relation of his brethren to the Christ whom they had anathematized, and to whom for their sakes he was willing himself to become anathema? The passage divides itself into apparently two, but in reality into three portions.

1. I speak the truth in Christ; I utter not falsehood; my

conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart;

2. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ

3. For the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

I divide and render substantially according to the English version verses 2 and 3.

The third I separate into two halves; the first half separated from the words preceding and following by parenthesis thus (for I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ), and then adjoining the last member of the verse, to the close of the second, and thus making it fill out the abruptly closing first and second verses which they bring to a smooth and fitting termination; thus, "That I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart, for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Thus it is seen that the main sentence—severing the part which we cannot but feel is an offending member both in thought and in construction—glides along with entire smoothness, and that the abruptness which at least seems very harsh entirely disappears. The difficulty then lies with the words which we have enclosed in parenthesis, and it remains to examine carefully this clause, and see whether we are shut up to the construction which our English versions, and which most of the versions give to it; or whether we can give it a fresh construction entirely in accordance both with what precedes and follows, and make it instead of an offense and a stumbling-block, a natural and ennobling appendage to the sentence.

First, then, in analyzing the phrase, we find the verb *εὔχομαι*, which our English version renders *wish, will*, as if

the Greek were *ἐθέλω* or *βούλομαι*. *Εὔχομαι* means *pray to God, pray* (in the classics sometimes, *to glory*). This meaning in some of its aspects I think *εὔχομαι* never renounces, and *βούλομαι* and *ἐθέλω* never admit. *Εὔχομαι* is here by the commentators softened down to *wish, will* (as if it were *βούλομαι, ἐθέλω*), simply for the sake of this passage in Romans, and without authority from any special usage. See *e. g.*, Acts 26 : 29, *εὐξαίμην ἂν τῷ θεῷ, I would to God* (*would pray to God*). Acts 27 : 29, *εὔχοντο ἡμέραν γενέσθαι, they prayed that it might become day.*

2. But secondly, not only is the verb mistranslated, but there is also a misrendering of the tense. This is the Imperf. Ind. *ηὐχόμην*, which is properly not *I could pray* (or wish), but *I was praying, used to pray*, a continued or *Imperfect* past. True, indeed, these Imperfect tenses *ηὐχόμην, ἐβουλόμην, ἤθελον* are not unfrequently used with ellipsis of "*ἄν*" as *ηὐχόμην* (*ἄν*) *I could* or *might be praying, ἐβουλόμην* (*ἄν*) *I could wish* or *be wishing.* But this is only the exceptional use of these tenses. It is not to be taken for granted, as their primary and proper meaning, and is not to be assigned to them without a sufficient reason. Sometimes indeed the two meanings nearly run into each other, and it may be doubtful which is the proper rendering of the imperfect. Thus Acts 25, Agrippa says, *ἐβουλόμην ἀκοῦσαι αὐτός, I was wishing*, or *I could wish to hear him* myself. But ordinarily the distinction is to be preserved and the confusion is not to be lightly and carelessly assumed. Thus in Acts 27 : 29, They then cast out the anchors *καὶ εὔχοντο ἡμέραν γενέσθαι* and *prayed that it might become day*, that day might dawn. So Xen. Anabasis, Lib. I., 3, *οἱ μὲν εὔχοντο ἁλισθῆναί, some were praying*, or *went to praying*, that they might be caught as being treacherous. Ana-

basis, Lib. I., "And they used to report his prayer (εὐχήν), how that he prayed ὡς εὔχετο, *how he prayed*, used to pray that he might live," etc. Thus until we find some sufficient reason we are to adhere to the natural and proper form of the imperfect, and if one departs from this on him rests the burden of proof. Until then we have some good reason for a different rendering, Paul's assertion is here to be taken *historically*, and he is to be regarded not as saying what he *might* or *would* do, but what he *did* formerly use to do, "I was praying or used to pray."

3. And this rendering becomes all the more easy, not to say imperative, by giving the true force to αὐτός ἐγώ, *I myself*, which has been made to do duty with εἶναι and made to serve as adjunct to the infinitive instead of being constructed, as by the invariable laws of the Greek language it must be so long as αὐτὸς ἐγώ stand together, as the emphatic subject of the principal verb ηὐχόμην. Thus it is not "*I prayed* (much less *I could pray*) that I myself might be anathema"; but "I myself was praying or used to pray to be anathema." If the emphasis were to be laid on εἶναι, the pronoun ἐγώ must either be omitted, when ηὐχόμην ἐμὲ αὐτόν (ἐμαυτόν) εἶναι could and naturally would be attracted into ηὐχόμην αὐτὸς εἶναι ἀνάθεμα, *I prayed that I might myself be* ἀνάθεμα. But as it stands, the attraction is impossible and the ἐγώ αὐτός is the emphatic subject of ηὐχόμην, and all the more emphatic the farther it is separated from the verb. It is not "I prayed (or could pray) to be myself anathema from Christ," but "I myself *once prayed* to be anathema from Christ." The emphasis lies on the action of the principal verb. The apostle adds incidentally this special ground of his sympathy with his Jewish brethren—he puts his own case into common unity with them.

On the principle of "*non ignora mali*," etc., that he as well as they was involved in that awful crime, he enforces the solemnity and earnestness of his affirmation of sympathetic anguish over the condition of his countrymen.

4. And with this corrected rendering of the tense of the verb and of the emphasis resting on the *αὐτὸς ἐγώ*, throwing the action of the verb into the past, and making the apostle glance briefly but forcibly at his own experience, and give a chapter out of his own history, we see why he uses the past historical tense; we see why he throws the emphasis on his own history; we see too, that he uses the verb *εὔχομαι* in the full strength of its import to *pray to God*, to *imprecate*, rather than any such weaker verb as *βούλομαι* or *ἐθέλω*; and we see why we do utter injustice to the meaning of *εὔχομαι* when we reduce it to a meaning which was in no way in the mind of the apostle. We see also why the apostle uses terms so harsh and apparently so unapostolic as *ἀνάθεμα εἶναι ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ*, terms which he could in no possible way have uttered from his apostolic standpoint. He could say in all truth that he himself *once prayed* to be accursed from Christ. He had himself invoked upon his head anathema from Jesus. Whether he was present in person and joined in the infuriated madness of the Jews, when they cried "Away with him," and prayed that his blood might be upon themselves and their children, we know not; but we know that if he did not join in, he succeeded to their crime, and invoked upon himself all its guilt and woe; with soul full of madness against the Lord and his disciples, he entered houses and haled the votaries of the faith to prison, joined actively in the martyrdom of Stephen, and "threatening vengeance and slaughter," pursued the disciples to foreign cities. The lan-

guage in which he here describes his conduct is precisely the language which marked the blasphemer and the persecutor. It is utterly impossible that he could now describe his emotions of apostolical compassion in the language of blasphemy and hate. He *did then* imprecate on himself anathema from the Lord Jesus; he could in no possible way describe in such terms the compassionate emotions with which his bosom was now swelling toward his unbelieving countrymen, toward those who still were drinking that bitter cup which he had once joined them in praying might be commended to his and their lips.

Is it urged in plea for this view that we can understand Paul's expressions only by entering sympathetically into his inmost experience, his fervent patriotism, his burning zeal for the salvation of men? True, but may we not quite as likely fail to fathom his conception of the unutterable woe of the soul that has accursed itself from Christ? Nothing can justify our ascribing such a sentiment to the apostle but the most irrefragable evidence. Michaelis' charge against the prayer as fanatical seems amply justified, and we may well question if the whole New Testament besides furnishes so striking a perversion of apostolic and Christian feeling at the expense of so gross a breach of exegetical evidence. The one radical misconception shatters the whole structure of the sentence, and brings in its train several unquestionable and serious errors. It turns *εὔχομαι*, *pray*, into the widely different and much weaker *βούλομαι*. It then weakens *ἠβουλόμην*, *was wishing*, into *ἠβουλόμην ἄν*, *I could be wishing* or *could wish*. It turns *ηὐχόμην αὐτός* *I myself used to pray* that I might, into *I could wish that I myself might be*. It converts the apostle's reluctant acknowledgment of his former participa-

tion in the madness of his countrymen into "ἐβουλόμην (or ἤθελον)" *I was wishing* or *used to wish.* It turns ηὐχόμην αὐτὸς ἐγώ, *I myself used* (*once*) *to pray,* into *I could wish that I myself were,* etc., and changes as I have indicated the apostle's reluctant acknowledgment of his former participation in the madness of his countrymen into a *quasi* wish, couched in the language of Jewish hate and fanaticism, that for the sake of his unbelieving countrymen he might himself undergo the horrors of exile from his Lord.

XV.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

1 Corinthians 15 : 29–32.

I PROPOSE subjecting to a careful re-examination this much vexed, but always interesting passage—a passage which has been the occasion perhaps of more perplexity to commentators, of more varying opinions, and of more abundant discussion, than any other of equal brevity in the entire Scriptures. I have no far-fetched and startling theory to propose; no subtle and ingenious interpretation to defend. I believe that the true solution lies near—is to be evolved from the very scope and drift of the apostle's thought, and yet does not lie in the quarter in which biblical scholars are now generally disposed to find it.

I commence by translating anew both the preceding and following context of the passage, that the reader may have at once under his eye all the elements for forming his judgment. I enter into no criticism of the text, and shall be careful in all cases where strict accuracy might admit, not to depart from the received English version. In one passage alone do I adopt a materially new construction of the original, and this in a passage which has no direct connection with the immediate theme of my discussion, and for reasons which are purely philological and rhetorical—not on the ground of any substantial variation in the thought. I translate as follows:

"(16) For if the dead (strictly, if dead persons) do not rise, neither is Christ risen; (17) and if Christ is not risen, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins; (18) then also they that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

"(20) But now (in fact) Christ *is* risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep. (21) For since through man is death, also through man is the resurrection of the dead; (22) for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. (23) But each in his own class [order]; as the firstfruits, Christ; (24) then they who are Christ's at his coming; then, at the last, when he delivereth up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have destroyed all dominion, and all authority and power—(25) for he must reign until he shall have subjected all enemies under his feet; (26) as a final enemy, Death is destroyed. (27) For 'He subjected all things under his feet.' But when he [God] shall have said that all things have been subjected to him, it is manifest that [it will be] with the exception of Him who subjected to him all things: (28) and when all things have been subjected to him, then also the Son himself will be subject to Him who subjected to him all things, that God may be all in all.

"(29) For, what will they do who undergo baptism for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why are they baptized for the dead? (30) Why do also we stand in jeopardy every hour? (31) (Daily do I die, I protest it by the glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.) (32) If [merely] after the manner of *men* I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

The reader who has the Greek text before him, will be at no loss for the reason of most of the departures in the foregoing from the ordinary English version. I translate, for the sake of uniformity, καταργήση *destroy*, in ver. 24 as well as in ver. 26. I render ὑποτάσσειν uniformly *put in subjection*, or *subject*, as is done in ver. 28 in the common version, and as in Hebrews 2 : 8, where the passage is cited from the Psalms, and for a like purpose. The first part of ver. 27 I enclose in quotation marks, regarding it as a mere citation from the eighth Psalm to justify, in a more formal way, the parenthetical statement of ver. 25. In ver. 27 I follow Meyer and Alford in making God the subject of εἴπῃ, and rendering the verb by the perfect future, which is the natural grammatical construction, and seems unobjectionable in respect to sense,—the "saying" being thus referred to the time when the subjection of all things shall have been consummated. My construction of verses 24, 25, 26, I leave, with one or two remarks, to the judgment of the reader. I need not defend to the classical scholar the possibility of rendering τὸ τέλος, adverbially, *at the last, finally*. The use of ὅταν with the subjunctive, is more easily explained by making it introduce the *protasis* of a hypothetical proposition, than by making it describe the accompaniments of τὸ τέλος taken as a noun. In this latter case, the future indicative would seem much more natural, at least in the first of the two clauses. The rhetorical advantages of my construction I believe still more decisive. While expressing no essentially different thought—for it still leaves room for that triple division of the resurrection process which many are disposed to find in it (though I believe erroneously): first, the resurrection of Christ; then that of his people at his coming; and, finally, the general

resurrection accompanying the last and crowning act in the great drama of redemption—it gains much, I think, in the force and beauty of its exhibition. Two or three somewhat loosely connected and disjointed sentences are molded into one of those full and rounded periods which occasionally surprise and delight us amid the impetuous flow of Paul's careless and rapid, but energetic, and sometimes even elegant diction, culminating in precisely the statement which is especially appropriate to the apostle's general theme, viz., the doing away and annihilating of death at and by the resurrection. In the common construction of these verses, this statement slips in as a subordinate and half-incidental one. With this it becomes the climactic and crowning member of a sentence full of weighty and majestic thought—the great and glorious fact which consummates and completes the subjection of the enemies of the Great Deliverer, and fitly accompanies his surrender of the universal sceptre to the Supreme Deity from whom it was received.

A special advantage in this construction is the clearing up of the seemingly tautological and awkward repetition in ver. 25 and 27. In the former, "For he must reign," etc., is a parenthetical and incidental assertion, introduced as the support of the hypothetical statement of his putting down all rule and authority and power, and in ver. 27, having completed his main idea, he now returns to establish the incidental statement by a formal quotation. The *γάρ*, *for*, is here like the *γάρ* at the close of the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6 : 14), where the Saviour, having introduced the petition, "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," returns, at the close of the prayer, to the clause regarding the forgiving of enemies, for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing it. I think

this much better than to refer the clause, as is commonly done, to the passage immediately preceding, regarding death. Its more natural reference is to the other. I merely add that here, as in Hebrews 2 : 8, it is used in a sense entirely foreign to that which seems to lie on the surface of the original, or was probably present to the consciousness of the writer; and it must be regarded as developing under a special inspiration, the hidden and deeper meaning of the Spirit. On the remainder of this glorious passage—on the glimpse which it opens to us of the stupendous revolutions yet to occur in the outward forms of Divine Sovereignty, when the Theanthropos, the God-Man, while retaining, in his essential oneness with the Father, his share in the sway of the universe, and while remaining, as the son of David, king forever over his spiritual Israel, shall, as Messiah, abdicate the throne of universal empire, and—the purpose of its temporary transfer being accomplished, and the kingdom whose foundations had been laid in lowliness and tears, being consummated in triumph and glory—the sceptre shall revert from the Incarnate God to the pure and absolute Deity by whom it had been temporarily relinquished—on all this I cannot now comment, but turn to the more immediate subject of this article.

Of the thousand and one explanations of the phrase "baptized for the dead," it would be idle and beyond my limits to give a detailed enumeration. They turn upon differences partly in translation, partly in exegesis, partly in both. Some take baptism figuratively, as a baptism of afflictions and martyrdom, others literally as water baptism. Some take ὑπέρ in the local sense of "*over, above,*" some as equivalent to ἀντί, *instead of,* others, "*on behalf of, for the good of.*" Some explain νεκρῶν of the bodies of Christians, conceived as

dead; others of Christ, taking the plural for the singular; others give it its natural sense—the dead. Hence flows a great variety of interpretations of which I can but glance cursorily at a few. The disagreement began in antiquity. Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Epiphanius, Tertullian, Ambrose, all have their separate modes of unravelling the difficulty. Chrysostom understands the term "dead" of the bodies of the baptized, and refers the passage to baptism as a symbol of the resurrection. "Baptized for the dead" is his language,—"*i. e.*, for their dead bodies; for unto this thou art baptized, believing in the resurrection of the dead." Baptism is on behalf of our bodies, as a symbol of their resurrection. Somewhat differently, but still referring it to the body, Theodoret: "He who is baptized," says the apostle, "is buried with his Lord, in order that sharing in his death, he may also become a sharer in his resurrection. But if the body is dead and does not rise, why, I pray, is it baptized?" Epiphanius explains it of clinics, catechumens, who claim and receive baptism (*πρὸ τῆς τελευτῆς λουτροῦ καταξιοῦντας*) just before death, and this view is substantially endorsed by Calvin, who refers it to such as receive baptism just over the dead, on the verge of the grave (*jam jam morituri*). Pelagius, followed by some expositors, refers the *νεκρῶν* to Christ, taking the plural for the singular, a usage abundantly familiar to the Greek poets, but not to be lightly assumed in prose, and especially in the New Testament. Expressions so general as Matt. 2 : 20, "They are dead who sought the young child's life," are but imperfectly parallel. Of those who thus make the baptism to be "on behalf of, for the sake of Christ," some understand it literally of water baptism, others figuratively, of a baptism of blood. Rosenmüller (following Nös-

selt and Ziegler) interprets: "*Qui maximis vitæ periculis se exponunt ut moriantur*"—who expose themselves to the greatest perils of life that they may die. Luther explains thus: "To give confirmation to the resurrection, Christians caused themselves to be baptized *over* the dead, *i. e.*, over their sepulchres;"—a fanciful conceit, unwarranted by any facts from this early period, and by the New Testament use of ὑπέρ which nowhere bears the local sense of *over*. Olshausen translates literally, "Baptized on behalf of, for the benefit of, the dead," but makes the benefit to consist in each successive baptism contributing to complete the πλήρωμα, the full number of believers that must be made up before the tenants of the sepulchre can realize the long-wished-for *Parousia* and resurrection; an interpretation, however, so improbable that Olshausen himself hardly propounds it when he abandons it for another scarcely more probable, viz.: baptized *instead* of the dead, to fill up the ranks vacated by the dead—to replace those whom death has snatched away. But under this construction, "for the dead" is a gratuitous addition. Nobody is baptized especially for this purpose, and *all* baptisms accomplish it equally. The question, therefore, "Why are they baptized for the dead?" resolves itself into, "Why are they baptized?" Bengel interprets: "Those who receive baptism and the Christian faith when they have death placed before their eyes (as it were hanging over the dead), and from old age, disease, or martyrdom are about to join themselves to the dead. Some, rejecting all the above, simply take the passage eliptically, "baptized for the dead," *i. e.*, for the resurrection of the dead.

This slight résumé of opinions will indicate the perplexity which the passage has occasioned to commentators. I cannot

examine them separately, and most of them sufficiently refute themselves, being obviously the offspring of desperate, though ingenious conjecture. One needs but to read them to feel that their authors grope blindly and therefore vainly; that they have failed to utter the "open sesame" which unlocks the secret of the passage. Some translate falsely, some interpret falsely; some both.

I have purposely left unmentioned one opinion, to which, from its wide and growing prevalence, I wish to devote a more particular consideration. It is that which takes the baptism to be literally a baptism on behalf of the dead, a baptism of living men for the benefit of persons who had died unbaptized. It assumes that a practice which we know had some slight later prevalence in ecclesiastical antiquity, existed already in the Corinthian church, and is elevated by Paul into an *argumentum ex concessis* in favor of the resurrection. It was first held among the ancients, we believe, by Ambrose; was accepted by Anselm, Erasmus, Grotius, etc., and has been adopted by very many of the best recent commentators, as Billroth, Rückert, Augusti, Neander, Meyer, De Wette. Alford in England, and in this country, Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, have given it their sanction. Most of them overcome any objections which may be urged, or any difficulties which they may themselves feel, drawn from extrinsic considerations, by a confident appeal to the obvious and grammatical sense of the passage. Some find in it no difficulty whatever. Rückert, who proclaims it almost as a principle of interpretation that the expositor should have neither faith nor feeling,—and who has nearly succeeded in making his own works exemplify his principle,—will not allow a moment's wavering. "The words are so clear that

they contain no ambiguity whatever, and their literal sense accords so perfectly with the general train of thought, that nothing less objectionable could have been inserted." He deems it a good *argumentum ad hominem*, whether Paul disapproved it or not: although in fact Rückert thinks that Paul did not disapprove it. An "ideal Paul, with the cultivation of the nineteenth century," might have seen with M. Rückert that "the usage was not only superstitious, but pernicious." But whether "the actual and historical Paul" had reached this correctness and clearness of spiritual perception is with him exceedingly problematical. De Wette, Meyer, Alford accept the interpretation unhesitatingly, regarding the passage as a sufficient voucher for the fact, while they do not believe in Paul's approval of the custom. Neander accedes to the explanation more reluctantly. He argues stoutly against it, and almost to the very close of his remarks gives the reader the impression that he will reject it. He says: "Thus it should seem that persons caused themselves to be baptized for the benefit of the dead. But this seems in apostolic times exceedingly unnatural, and in contradiction with all that which assumes personal faith as indispensable. Hence at first even infant baptism was not practised. True, we find early an enlargement of the sphere of baptism; *e. g.*, the *Shepherd of Hermas* states that the apostles, after their death, baptized the pious of the Old Covenant. But here it was always assumed that they, after death, had been led to faith in Christ, of which baptism was merely a necessary condition and means. But if baptism was to take the place of faith, no proclamation of the gospel would be needed. Paul could not adduce such an opinion without condemning it; but if we even grant that he could have withheld this

utterance as not lying within the scope of his present object, yet how are we to explain the rise of such a superstition among the early Christians?"

"It is claimed that we have traces of such a vicarious baptism. Epiphanius speaks of such a usage among the disciples of Cerinthus. But, granting, that in his time the practice existed among these people, Cerinthus himself was very far from practising it. Besides, Epiphanius is no reliable witness. Chrysostom, in a homily on the passage, ascribes a similar doctrine to the Marcionites. But the Marcionites of that age were an ignorant, superstitious, country people, degenerated from the free spirit of their founder. Nothing of the sort can certainly be ascribed to Marcion himself. Tertullian alleges no such charge against Marcion (Adv. Marcion., V. X.) since his book *De resur. carnis.*, in treating of our passage will not assume that Paul deals in the *argumentatio ad hominem*, and knows nothing of any such usage."

When after this we find Neander himself yielding to this interpretation, we may well suppose that he found very serious difficulties attending every other. And he, in fact, adopts it only in a qualified manner. He supposes that specific cases, with which the apostle was acquainted, may have occurred at Corinth, especially as a recent pestilence had prevailed, which had perhaps carried off many who, being brought to the faith, died before they could receive baptism; in some cases, therefore, a kinsman or near friend might have volunteered to do for the dead what he would gladly have done for himself, and the motive, at least, could not be condemned by the apostle. "Perhaps," he adds, "Paul reserved his condemnation of the practice until his

coming, and it was his disapproval of it then, which caused it to disappear from the church." To the latter effect also Meyer.

I believe I must be pardoned if I attach more weight to Neander's arguments than to his counter conclusion. I admit that his authority, combined with that of so large a number of eminent and able interpreters, and sustained as is their judgment by the apparent, superficial, merely verbal import of the passage, is not without weight. But we cannot accept even all this as ultimate, and must try to satisfy our own minds whether they have reached the real sense of the apostle. With Rückert, we say, "give to the sacred writer nothing that is your own;" but with him we add, "take from him nothing that is his," and we shall try to pursue our examination in the spirit of both these principles.

That a practice so grossly superstitious as that of baptizing living persons for the benefit of dead ones, whether having died with or without faith—that notions so widely exaggerated of the necessity and efficacy of baptism, had already sprung up in the primitive church, and under the eye of the apostle, and are alluded to by him not only without express censure, but with the *quasi*-sanction of being incorporated as an element into an argument for the resurrection, is intrinsically improbable, and can be admitted only on the most decisive testimony. What is that testimony? First, not one syllable about it in all the New Testament besides. No intimation either in the Acts or the Epistles of any such practice, or of any tendency toward it. Tertullian, writing late in the second century, knows nothing of the existence of any such usage even among the heretical Marcionites, against whom he wrote, and as he mentions such a possible interpretation of

this passage, but only to reject and condemn it,[1] we may assume that if it had prevailed among the Marcionites of his time, he would have certainly mentioned it. Chrysostom and Epiphanius, who wrote fully three hundred years after our epistle was written, are our earliest vouchers for the existence of such a usage. With them it is confined to the heretical sects of the Marcionites and Cerinthians. Chrysostom tells us of the Marcionites, that if a catechumen died unbaptized, they concealed a person under the bed; the dead man was then asked whether he wished to be baptized, and upon an affirmative reply being given by the concealed person, the latter was baptized in place of the deceased. Epiphanius, likewise, tells us of "a tradition regarding the Cerinthians, that when any person died among them before receiving baptism, others were baptized in their name, that they might

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[1] "Noli apostolum novum statim auctorem aut confirmatorem ejus (institutionis) denotare, ut tanto magis sisteret carnis resurrectionem quanto illi qui vanè pro mortuis baptizarentur, fide resurrectionis hoc facerent. Habemus illum alicubi unius baptismi definitorem. Igitur et pro mortuis tingui pro corporibus est tingui: mortuum enim corpus ostendimus." (Cont. Marcion. V., 10.)

I add the comment of Jacobi from Kitto's Cycl. of Bib. Literature. "Tertullian in these words distinguishes a false application of baptism by substitution, from the general one adhered to by the apostles; he thinks that the apostle confirms baptism *pro mortuis*, not in that erroneous, but in a proper sense, compatible with his other and general views of baptism. Of that erroneous practice, however, Turtullian, in this, as in the other place, evidently knows no more than what is indicated by Paul in the above passage, neither does he mention that such a custom prevailed in his time among the Marcionites or any others." Jacobi, though he accords with Neander in interpreting our passage, yet says, as the conclusion of his investigation, "All that we can infer from the above statement is, that baptism by substitution took place among the Marcionites, and perhaps also among the Cerinthians and other smaller sects, toward the close of the fourth century, a period when the confused views of the church as to the relation of the external to the spiritual, might easily have favored that erroneous custom; but that it existed between that period and the time when Paul wrote, is wholly unsubstantiated."

undergo no punishment in the resurrection, from their failure to receive baptism." Epiphanius, Neander tells us, is no reliable authority, yet admitting that the practice prevailed among them in his time, it is certain, he tells us, that neither Cerinthus nor Marcion could have introduced it. The sum of the historical testimony then is, that nearly three hundred years after the apostles, in an age when the most exaggerated notions regarding the efficacy of baptism prevailed, the usage in question existed among one or two small, heretical, and ignorant sects; yet not even then in the church generally, and not even among these at an early period. How great, then, the improbability that it should have already sprung up among the Corinthians, and gained a footing sufficient to secure its canonization in an apostolical epistle!

And improbable precisely among the Corinthians. There was indeed enough that was reprehensible in the Corinthian church; but it does not seem the soil favorable to the springing up of an abuse like this. Its disorders were the result rather of lax morality, lax discipline, spiritual pride, and intellectual pride, than of a superstitious and slavish ritualism. The Corinthians discarded Paul for the more eloquent and philosophical Apollos; they suffered a man to live incestuously with his father's wife; they displayed their superiority to an overscrupulous conscientiousness by sitting in idols' temples, and partaking of idols' sacrifices; they desecrated the Lord's Supper by turning it into a common meal; they used their spiritual gifts for the purposes of ostentatious display, and finally, they speculated, with philosophical license, on the impossibility and absurdity of the resurrection. All their tendencies were rather in the direction of an idealistic exaltation over, and contempt of, ceremonies, than of a superstitious enslave-

ment to them; and though we can by no means deny that amid the multifarious abuses, speculative and practical, which had developed themselves at Corinth, there should have appeared such a strange and exceptional one as this, yet surely it is not in harmony with the general character either of the excellencies or the defects of the Corinthian church. At all events, the persons who denied the resurrection for idealistic reasons, as is evident below, are not the ones who would have been likely to be the victims of this gross and materializing superstition. Even the apostle virtually separates those whom he is addressing from this class—"They who are baptized,"—and yet it is only as an *argumentum ad hominem* that this appeal has any value, and only with those who practised the rite that it could have any weight. We must assume, therefore, that it both existed in the Corinthian church and precisely with those who denied the resurrection, else the argument becomes not only intrinsically, but relatively, unmeaning.

But, again, is it conceivable that such a practice should have existed at Corinth without Paul's disapproving it, and that disapproving, he should not have expressed his disapproval? nay, rather, that by incorporating it into a weighty argument, he should have seemingly given it his sanction? In a letter mainly devoted to the correction of abuses, which descends to topics such as the fact and the manner of women's speaking in the assemblies of the church, would Paul leave such a flagrant superstition as this wholly passed over except with the incidental and, by inference, commendatory notice here given to it, as belonging among the minor things to be set in order when he came? If it was sufficiently prevalent to make the brief mention here made of it intelligible, then it must have

been so prevalent that Paul's omission to notice it could not have been from forgetfulness, and when he did have occasion to call it up, could he have done so without putting a stigma upon it? for that his language does not, as Alford supposes, involve a censure, we shall see by-and-by.

We are told, indeed,—and I grant the justness of the statement,—that Paul was in the habit of attending to but one thing at a time; that, with his mind on a single point, he postponed for the time being other, perhaps intrinsically more important aspects of the case. Paul did not, when discussing one topic, manifest the anxiety of a modern systematic theologian to guard his language against all possible cavil and misapplication; but poured forth his thoughts with unfettered freedom and fullness of expression. Yet all this does not meet the present case, nor account for Paul's silence on so grave a matter. Two so-called analogous cases are cited from this epistle. Paul speaks, 11 : 5, of a woman speaking in public, without disapproving of anything but the manner; while subsequently, 14 : 34, he condemns the thing itself. So again, at 8 : 10, he condemns sitting at meat in an idol's temple, as if he regarded it as objectionable merely because it gave offense to the weaker brethren, and not because it was intrinsically wrong; but in 10 : 14–22, he denounces the thing itself as idolatry. Yet surely these furnish but slender analogies to the case in question. They prove that Paul may refer to a practice which he disapproves, without stating at the time every ground on which he disapproves it. As a matter of fact, both these usages—women's speaking in the public assemblies, and the sitting at meat in idols' temples—he has mentioned twice in the epistle, and each time for a distinct purpose of censure. Can we find in this any reason for supposing that

another really greater abuse than either of them, he would reserve entirely to a merely incidental and virtually commendatory mention at the very close of his epistle? The case must be hard pressed that can seek for shelter under such precedents. Because in two cases, Paul, when first referring to them in terms of censure, has deferred the main ground of his condemnation to a subsequent more emphatic avowal, therefore we are authorized to suppose that he might refer to another greater evil than either, without any expression of his disapproval at all!

Another ground of objection is that the argument itself is a nullity. Even as an *argumentum ad hominem*, it has no proper force. Unless, as already observed, the deniers of the resurrection and the practicers of the rite are the same persons, it has none whatever, for the only virtue of an *ad hominem* argument is derived from the admissions of your antagonist. If he replies to you, I hold no such opinions, and believe in no such practices as those from which you argue, your argument of course falls to the ground. If those who denied the resurrection did not themselves believe and practise this baptism for the dead, they would have replied to the apostle: Your argument amounts to nothing with us, for the practice is superstitious and senseless anyway. If you will employ such reasoning, go and urge it with those with whom it will have force. But alike the nature of the two heresies, and the expression of the apostle—"They who are baptized"—render it improbable that both existed with the same class of persons.

And in other respects also, the appeal is a nullity. Its force, if it has any, should rest on the fact that baptism on behalf of the dead involves a belief in the resurrection of the

dead, and draws its significance from that belief. But all baptism proceeds on precisely the same belief, and this kind of baptism rests on no special difference of principle as to the resurrection, but upon a mere peculiarity of opinion as to the efficacy of baptism. There is, then, really no more pertinence in the inquiry, "Why are they baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not?" than in asking, "Why are they baptized at all, if the dead rise not?" The import of this species of baptism is no more nullified by the denial of the resurrection than that of ordinary believers' baptism, and the apostle has needlessly dragged in a superstitious observance to point an argument which is just exactly as forcible, and far more dignified, without it.

But again: the form of the question, "What will they do who are baptized," etc., is unsuited to this meaning. Meyer's interpretation of the τί ποιήσουσι, viz., (*what sort of a thing*), how foolish and absurd a thing will they do, is forced and inadmissible. That should rather require τί or ποῖον ποιοῦσιν, (*what sort of thing do they do*?) or some such form. Rückert's "will they not cease to do it?" is worthy of the rest of Rückert's interpretation of this passage. The true meaning of the phrase is—as substantially De Wette and Alford—what will they gain? what will they do? how will they get on? what will become of them? The question marks not merely the folly of the act, but its folly and uselessness for those who perform it. The question thus, under the interpretation we are considering, becomes entirely inappropriate. It should be, in effect, "How useless a thing do they do who are baptized for the dead! What will those dead persons do or gain, for whom living men are baptized?" As it is, the question indicates

not that the dead are expected to be benefited, but the living persons who are baptized for them, and the folly of their action lies not in its failure to benefit the dead, but to benefit themselves. The second form of the apostle's question would, indeed, admit of either application. But this as more general, is to be explained by the more specific form of the first; and we here call attention, both as discrediting this interpretation, and pointing to the true one, to the fact that the apostle's question clearly indicates the absurdity of the action, not in its bearings on the dead, but on the living persons who undergo the baptism.

My final objection to the exposition in question, I believe even more decisive. It does not suit the context. It is not in harmony with the apostle's train of thought. It foists an irrelevant, impertinent, disturbing idea into a line of sentiment otherwise natural, coherent, and impressive. In order to show this, I must ask the reader to turn back to the passage, and follow me in subjecting it to a careful analysis. He will see that the apostle treats the subject under two aspects, a negative and a positive, and that this makes really two divisions of that entire passage (from ver. 13 to ver. 34) in which he treats of the fact of the resurrection. The negative part states with apostolic authoritativeness the disastrous consequences which flow from a denial of the resurrection. The positive part with equal authoritativeness affirms the resurrection, basing it on the resurrection of Christ, and following it out to its glorious consequences in the annihilation of death, and the consummation of the kingdom of God. The second or positive portion, is interposed as a sort of digression between the sundered sections of the negative, and extends from ver. 20, "But now is Christ risen," to ver. 28,

"that God may be all in all." The first or negative portion begins with ver. 13, and runs on to ver. 20, where it is broken by the introduction of the other positive, triumphant strain of sentiment which the impatient ardor of the apostle would allow him no longer to defer. At ver. 29, when the fiery impulse under which he had bounded off and made his eagle flight into the seventh heaven, is exhausted, he returns to finish out that sad and gloomy picture, and show the deniers of the resurrection what a cheerless contrast they were creating to the blessed and glowing hopes of the gospel.

This in general. Let us trace the line of thought more particularly. It is simple and easy to follow. There is, properly speaking, no reasoning and no attempt at any. The apostle speaks simply as one who knows. If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen. The resurrection of Christ involves the resurrection of his people. The non-resurrection of his people argues back to the non-resurrection of their Lord, and with this comes tumbling down, in melancholy and hopeless ruin, the whole structure of Christian faith and hope. By logical necessity, the non-resurrection of Christians involves the non-resurrection of Christ. Jesus perished in the sepulchre, and in that same grave are buried all the prospects, and hopes, and joys of his followers. The preaching of him is vain; faith in him is vain; they who have fallen asleep in him, have perished; and his disciples consequently,—such is the inevitable inference,—sacrificing the present with no hope of the future, the victims of self-denial, suffering, persecution, peril, death, are the most miserable of men. Thus far the course of thought is transparently clear, nor can there be any reasonable doubt as to the import of ἐλεεινότεροι (*more miser-*

able), with which this section closes. It refers not, certainly not primarily, to any subjective and ideal misery, growing out of the terrible contrast between the Christian's anticipations and the reality. He is not called the most miserable of men because, having been exalted so high in hope, he is subjected to so dire a disappointment. This were bad enough, doubtless, but this is not what the apostle means, and is in fact a sort of refining foreign to his mental habits. He has in mind a much sterner and more practical, though perhaps homelier, truth. He refers to the actual sufferings, sacrifices, imminent and deadly perils which encompassed the path of the followers of the Crucified. Their Christian profession made them universally odious. They were the victims, always of hate, and often of persecution. Between their own principles and popular proscription, they were cut off from nearly the whole circle of worldly pleasures. Stigmatized by the communities whose idolatries, vices, and pleasures they shunned and reprobated, as bigoted and fanatical sectaries; their peace always, and their lives often, in jeopardy; and so far as safe, safe only because despised, their conduct might surely be denounced as supremely foolish, their lot as supremely miserable, if their hope after all was but an illusion and a lie. "The faithful," says Bengel, commenting on the passage, "have an intimate, present joy in God, and therefore are now happy; but if there is no resurrection, their joy is greatly impaired." Such is not the scope of the apostle. He knows no true joy of believers apart from the resurrection. Their joy is not merely impaired, it is annihilated. Their hope is not merely circumscribed, it is extinguished. Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel, and guaranteed by the resurrection

of Christ. Expunge that fact, and a heavier than Egyptian night resettles on all the region which the gospel had illuminated, and patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, the Old Covenant and the New, all belong to one stupendous scheme of imposture and illusion.

Let me not be misunderstood. That Paul actually drank deep daily draughts of present spiritual joy, we cannot for a moment question. But this does not, cannot, enter into his argument, for, deprived of its support in a living Christ, this joy is an absolute nullity. The fountain cut off, what becomes of the stream? The Sun of the moral heavens blotted out, what are any fancied rays but mockery? His hope and faith deprived of every particle of genuineness and vitality, outlawed from the present world, and with no asylum in the future, the Christian sinks into the most miserable of men. Let Paul be his own interpreter. "If the dead rise not, why stand we in peril every hour? Why do I die daily? Why did I contend with the wild beasts of Ephesus?" We need not hesitate therefore. The misery spoken of is no ideal product of the contrast between a glorious hope and a wretched realization; it is the hard, stubborn, palpable, objective misery of a life of unrewarded sacrifice, suffering, and danger.

Here the apostle breaks off. Impatient of dwelling on a comfortless and dreary view—and false as comfortless—he turns upon his readers the reverse side of the picture—a picture glowing with the positive fact of the resurrection of Christ, and its blessed consequences in the resurrection of his people, and the destruction of man's great enemy, death. This affirmative and triumphant strain culminates at ver. 28, in the reversion of the world's sovereignty to the hand of absolute Deity. The impulse which had prompted and borne up

his flight being exhausted, the apostle then turns back to complete his negative portraiture. "For," he adds, with his mind on the darker hypothesis and its consequences, "what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not? Why do even we stand in jeopardy every hour? I protest, I die daily," and so on to the "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." It is thus most apparent that at ver. 29 he resumes in the same strain in which he had broken off at ver. 19: that he is giving the darker aspects of the case, and that —certainly with the exception of ver. 19 itself—all is a continuation and expansion of the ἐλεεινότεροι (*more miserable*), above. This determines, I think, the commencement of the digression, and shows how far back we are to refer the ἐπεί (*since*). Meyer, indeed, denies any digression, and refers the ἐπεί to the passage immediately preceding. This is simply absurd. The remoter reference is recognized by nearly all the commentators, and our analysis makes clear to what it is to be referred. The negative view of the case, commenced at ver. 13, is suspended at ver. 19, and after the interposition of the positive view, is resumed in the same strain at ver. 29, and carried forward to the emphatic "Be not deceived," etc., of ver. 33.

It is not necessary, indeed, to maintain that the apostle, in resuming with ἐπεί, had a definite reference to any particular passage or expression. It is sufficient that his mind was filled with the general idea of the wretched consequences flowing from the denial of the resurrection, and that, after having fully set forth the positive and glowing *fact*, he now returns to complete the darker delineation, and show fully to the Corinthian speculators over how dreary a gulf they were hanging. With this general thought filling his mind, and

crowding for utterance, nothing would be more natural than to resume really as if the thread had not been broken, while in fact ver. 29 is connected not so much with ver. 19 as with the idea in his mind out of which both spring.

At all events ver. 29 really takes up the thought where the ἐλεεινότεροί (*more miserable*) had left it, and carries it forward with a natural development. Passing over our present passage, how unmistakably true is this of all the rest! Why stand *we* in peril every hour? "I die daily," *i. e.*, my daily life is but a daily dying. "If after the manner of *men* merely, with no hope of a hereafter, I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me?" And how natural the crowning conclusion, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!"

We are justified in taking this entire negative together as constituting a coherent whole. Look at the "more miserable" above; look at that series of expressions which form its commentary below. Let us briefly sum up the whole, and see how simple, natural, harmonious, and forcible the line of thought. "No resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. Then is your faith vain: then they that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. Then we Christians, with our numberless sacrifices and sufferings, are the most miserable of men. For what, in that case, will they gain who are baptized for the dead? Why do also we encounter peril every hour? Why do I die daily? Why did I contend with the wild beasts of Ephesus? All our sufferings, exposures, dangers, how utterly gratuitous! Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!" Now I ask, in all earnestness, what place in this line of thought for such an idea as that of baptizing living persons for the benefit of dead ones? I leave out of the account

the intrinsic grossness of the superstition; the utter improbability of its existing at Corinth; the still greater improbability of Paul's alluding to it with seeming favor; the futility of the argument in itself. But, I ask, what makes it here? What connection or coherence has it with the line of thought? What is it but an impertinent intruder, marring the symmetry and disturbing the course, as well as degrading the dignity, of the apostle's natural and just appeal? All the rest is legitimate; this is illegitimate. All the rest declares that without the resurrection Christians are pre-eminently miserable. This declares that, without the resurrection, a certain superstitious observance loses its significance. All in the connection goes to show that the Christian's lot, apart from the resurrection, is peculiarly wretched. This would show no such thing. The most that can be said of this is, that it is a mere nullity—that neither Principal nor Substitute has either gained or lost any thing by the transaction. Both are just as well off as before, and the reference is as completely out of place in the connection, as it is futile in respect to argument, and improbable as to the fact.

The phrase "baptized for the dead," ought, it should seem, in its place, to refer in some way to those sufferings and woes to which Christianity subjects its votaries. Nothing but this fits into the context. And, I add, the form of expression—the manner in which the passage is coupled with the following, leads to the same conclusion. "Why are they baptized for the dead? Why do also we stand in peril every hour?" It is impossible to avoid the conviction that these two sentences stand in close connection as to the thought: that one continues, explains, or modifies the other; that it is either the expression in literal language of what the other has expressed

figuratively, or a more restricted statement of what the other has declared generally. Two ideas of so diverse a character as that of a gross superstition and legitimate and noble Christian exposure, cannot be thus yoked together by a writer even more careless and unstudied than Paul. Paul often obscures his logic by terse and abrupt expression, but he does not thus force together ideas logically unrelated and incoherent. "Baptized for the dead" ought in the connection, to express an idea akin to those of the "stand in jeopardy," "die," "fought with wild beasts," that follow, and altogether are natural developments of the "more miserable," their starting point above.

I have thus far dealt with the facts and the logic of the matter. I have looked at the historical evidence, the nature of the usage, and finally at the logical exigencies of the passage. I regard this last evidence as decisive, both as to what the meaning of the passage is not, and what it is. We have no right, indeed, to force our own meaning into an author's train of thought, but we have a right to draw his meaning out of it. We may rightly presume that he will lead us toward the goal toward which his footsteps are regularly tending. We may surely make logical consistency an important element in interpretation. Man is something more than a mere grammar-grinder. The lexicon is not the whole of exegesis. Logic and rhetoric—the law of thought and the law of passion—are mightier than grammar, and will ever furnish the most decisive elements in the interpretation of human speech. We can never rest in our exposition until the logical demands of the passage are satisfied. However seemingly encompassed in grammatical rules, it will refuse to lie still, but will arise and haunt us with the ghost of a murdered thought. When,

on the contrary, the difficulties of thought have resolved themselves, we easily dispose, especially in an energetic and impassioned writer, of some difficulties of expression. Not, however, that we here encounter any serious difficulties of expression. We shall find the language easily yielding to the demand of the thought.

The same analysis of the train of thought which rules out the idea of baptizing living persons for dead ones, excludes some other explanations intrinsically much less objectionable. If this analysis is just, the passage ought to have reference in some way to the folly of Christian sacrifices and sufferings, in case the dead do not rise, for this is here the scope of the apostle's thought. Christians, by all the hardships and perils which their profession entails upon them, are by so much worse off than other men—this is here the burden of his thought—the last thought with which he broke off at ver. 19, and the only thought which he dwells upon after ver. 29. The explanation, therefore, often adopted, "baptized for [the resurrection of] the dead," though easily drawn from the words by a natural ellipsis, and in itself a pertinent and forcible question, is not pertinent just here. The apostle is not arguing for the resurrection from the import of rites and ceremonies, whether regular or heretical, but simply showing how completely wretched its denial makes the believer. But a baptism for the resurrection of the dead, if the dead do not rise, is merely a nullity. Like the heretical baptism before spoken of, it leaves the person precisely where it found him. It amounts to nothing either way. His condition is no better and no worse: or, rather, if that were *all*, it would be better, for he has his hope in the present life, and then—why, "out of nothing nothing can arise, not even sorrow." The explanation

then is inappropriate. The question which the apostle should ask, is not, Why are they baptized for the resurrection of the dead? but, Why are they baptized for the dead? Not, Why in baptism do they look beyond the grave? but, Why in baptism do they devote themselves to the grave? Why do they undergo a baptism which brings them into sure alliance with the dead, if the dead have no resurrection? Why hasten to that goal, if that goal is nothingness or destruction?

And this thought, so appropriate to the context, and so germane to the argument of the apostle, lies, I believe, on the very face of the expression; may be drawn out from it by no violent process. Before inquiring how this may be done, let us look for a moment at the meaning of the word ὑπέρ. It first means *over*, locally, but in this sense is unknown to the New Testament. It means, secondly, *on behalf of, for the sake of,* (*over*, for defense,) and then by a slight extension, *in reference to, in relation to;* the two classes of meanings so playing into each other that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them. Of both uses, however, the instances are abundant. In the latter sense (*in reference to*), it differs from περί, *concerning*, as implying an interest in the person or thing referred to. Thus any person might speak περὶ γραφῆς, *concerning an indictment,* but ὑπὲρ τῆς γραφῆς naturally only one of the interested parties. The fundamental idea in all such cases of ὑπέρ is that it brings the parties into close relation with its object, the precise nature of the relation, whether friendly or antagonistic, being determined by the circumstances. Of another possible, but very rare meaning of ὑπέρ, as equivalent to ἀντί, *instead of,* I doubt if there is any clearly authenticated case in the New Testament. The passages where it is so rendered admit easily the meaning *on behalf of.* "Baptized for the dead" then is,

with no straining of the words, baptized into relation to the dead, baptized so as to be allied with the dead, reckoned among the dead rather than among the living. The extreme brevity and abruptness of the expression may make it doubtful in what precise way its general import is best evolved. I glance at two or three explanations.

1. Bengel explains, baptized over the dead, not literally, but figuratively—baptized, as it were, overhanging the dead —with death and the dead immediately before one. This, in one of his applications, viz., to martyrs, would be in keeping here. But it is harsh, and may be dismissed as improbable.

2. We have, again, Rosenmüller's interpretation, "*Qui se maximis vitæ periculis exponunt ut moriantur*" (*they who expose themselves to such dangers of life as that they die*). This takes *βαπτίζω* figuratively—overwhelmed, plunged in affliction and peril for the sake of, so as to ally themselves to, the dead. This construction I incline to believe possible. The figurative uses of *βαπτίζειν* in Greek are abundant, and not always with any determining object in the immediate connection. Nor is it easy to say how far the striking language of our Lord to his disciples in regard to his and their baptism of suffering, may have influenced the use of the word among primitive Christians. Nor is the harshness of the connection with *ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν*, in our view, an insuperable objection to this meaning, which, of course, fits perfectly to what follows. Still, in the absence of clear cases of like usage, it is safer, perhaps, to take the verb literally.

3. We have then, thirdly, two ideas, either of which may be drawn out of the phrase. The first makes it have respect to the universal significance and effect of baptism, in that Christians, by their baptism on the one hand, renounce all

the pleasures and enjoyments of life, thus linking themselves ideally to the dead, and on the other at once subject themselves to the peril of death, and bind themselves to maintain their fidelity at the expense of life. Such was emphatically the condition of primitive baptism. In other senses than the purely spiritual, they who were baptized into Christ, were baptized into death. The very condition of discipleship was taking up the cross, having the sentence of death in themselves,—a devoting of themselves to death. Thus their baptism, as the symbol of their Christian profession, was both in its ideal character, as a denial of the pleasures and interests of life, and in its actual character, as exposing them to suffering and peril, from which they must not shrink, emphatically a baptism for the dead.

There are two objections to this interpretation: First, of a literal baptism, we might expect the participle *βαπτισθέντες*, rather than the continued present *βαπτιζόμενοι*. But to this we may reply, that while each baptism was a single event, the apostle, looking at a series or succession of baptisms, would naturally use the present. The other objection is, that the form of expression, "What will they do who are baptized," etc., seems naturally to apply to only a portion of Christians, to separate a part from the whole. He should have said, "What shall we do," etc. For this we have, perhaps, no entirely satisfactory answer. We might indeed regard the *οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι* as a descriptive term, standing here for all Christians, and employed precisely because it here suits the writer's purpose. An American might be writing of some duty devolving upon his countrymen as republicans, and as a synonym for the entire body say, "For those who profess democratic principles, cannot but," etc. The "those who

profess" would here be co-extensive with the previous term "Americans," and so the οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι may here be co-extensive with the whole body of Christians, as universally descriptive of them. In this way I deem it possible to regard the passage as applicable to all Christians—especially of that early time—in that feature of their Christian profession which made it virtually a taking up of the cross, and allying themselves to the dead.

But, secondly, it may refer, as οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι would naturally indicate, not to the whole body of Christians, but only to a part. It then denotes, not the necessary condition of all baptism, but the baptism of those whom their Christian profession subjected to actual suffering, peril, and perhaps martyrdom. Of these, especially of such as underwent death for Christ's sake, it would surely be no harsh language to say that they were "baptized for the dead"; that they underwent a baptism which destined them for and allied them to the dead. As to the thought, look at the apostle's frequent language elsewhere, "God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed unto death"; "For always we that live are delivered unto death"; "I die daily"; "In deaths oft." And take the entire passage, 2 Cor. 11 : 23–28, as an emphatic commentary on the idea of being baptized for the dead and the whole following portion of the passage. And as to the *expression*, it is determined by the subject about which the apostle is writing. His mind is here on *the dead* (οἱ νεκροί) with reference to their resurrection, and nothing would be more natural for him than to assimilate the phraseology in which he describes deadly suffering to the language of the context, and thus to set over against the resurrection of the dead a "baptism for the dead" as emphatically and justly

descriptive of their earthly life, at least of that of himself and his fellow-preachers and propagators of the gospel, who, wherever they went, went in the very face of martyrdom. The figure is an energetic, impassioned one, but by no means unnatural.

I confess I feel half disposed to adopt Rosenmüller's figurative interpretation, and to regard the verb, thus used, as sufficiently explained by the context. But the literal explanation is perhaps easier, yields an equally good sense, and is only less rhetorically forcible. That idea is, baptized for the *dead*—baptized into relation to the dead, so baptized as that they belong, by sacrifice, suffering, peril, martyrdom, rather to the dead than to the living, and are thus the victims of a fate which has no alleviation nor apology, except in the resurrection. And I trust I have shown the utter untenableness of that interpretation which refers the passage to a usage elsewhere unheard of in the New Testament, nor heard of in the church for three centuries afterward, and heard of then only among some ignorant and fanatical sectaries.

I close with two remarks: first, I ask attention to the simplicity of my interpretation. It is not elaborate and far-fetched. It depends on no subtle and ingenious combinations. I have not brought it from afar. I have not ascended into heaven to bring it down from above, nor descended into the deep to bring it up from beneath. The word is nigh us. We reach it by the simplest evolution of the writer's thought. It lies on the very face of the passage, and is the only solution which clears the thought of the writer, while nothing in the language repels us from it. If the mere literal, mechanical structure of the words, without thought of history, logic, or intrinsic force, favors the view of Alford and De

Wette, a slight regard to that impassioned element which enters so largely into the style of Paul, makes our explanation easy and natural. And if Paul might be expected to speak with impassioned energy anywhere, it would be in dealing with the deniers of the resurrection.

Once more: I would dwell a moment on the common fallacy that Paul is adducing a series of arguments in proof of the resurrection. Nothing can be more unfounded. When he comes to the mode of the resurrection, he cites two or three analogies which give his discussion the appearance—though it is little but the appearance—of an argument. But here there is not the shadow of any argument in the proper sense of the term. The apostle simply affirms on the one hand that without the resurrection there is no risen Christ, no Christian hope, and all is gloom, wretchedness and despair; and on the other affirms the resurrection of Christ with its glorious consequences in the resurrection of his people, and the destruction of death. There are simply two authoritative statements,—negatively, that the non-resurrection of the dead implies the non-resurrection of Christ; positively, that there is a resurrection of Christ, guaranteeing the resurrection of his people. All is involved in this. On the negative side the course of thought is: If Christ is not risen, Christian hope is vain, Christian sacrifices and sufferings are futile; the Christian's lot is supremely wretched, and his baptism for the dead but plunges him prematurely into that sleep of death which knows no awakening, that night of the grave on which dawns no morrow.

It seems to me that the language in which our Lord describes figuratively the Christian life, ought to have suggested the right interpretation regarding this passage. The Saviour

goes through life and makes his way toward the grave under the shadow of the cross. With him, therefore, the consecration and the life of his followers is a taking upon themselves and a bearing of the cross. The apostles do not live generally in prospect of crucifixion, but are exposed to nameless and numberless forms of death by persecution; to them the natural and inevitable solace for their suffering is the now revealed hope of the resurrection. Thus then, the baptism which pledges them to the grave, opens to them that glorious resurrection in which death is swallowed up and extinguished.

XVI.

PREACHING TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

1 Peter 3 : 18-20; 4 : 6.

"BEING put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, though they had at one time disobeyed (him) when the long-suffering of God was waiting in the days of Noah, while an ark was being prepared.

For, for this cause the good tidings were published to the dead, that though they had been judged according to men in the flesh, they might live according to God in the Spirit."

"No preaching to the dead," was the energetic title of a sometime article in a religious Quarterly, controverting the view of Christ's personal preaching to the spirits in prison. Inasmuch as Peter declares expressly that there *was* preaching to the dead, the title seems a little unhappy, as half suggesting that, in his vehement championship, the author would venture to break a lance even with the apostle. Of course he had no such purpose. The question was with him, as with all of us, as to the sacred writer's meaning, and this determined, the controversy is closed. He would doubtless simply emphasize his conviction as to what was, in these celebrated passages, the purpose of the apostle. Under every view, however, the question of the import of our passage is a very serious one; not merely grammatically interesting, but as touching, perhaps vitally, the final destiny of a portion of the race, and

hence difficult to be treated with entire impartiality. The advocate of "eternal hope," welcomes it as letting in a ray of light on the darkness of the final prison house. To him who holds that death seals irrevocably human destiny, the very consistency of Scripture seems almost to urge an escape from the obvious import of our passage.

Is there such an escape? Can the present passage be diverted from its apparent import? I do not see how it altogether can be, and have long felt in a strait betwixt my conviction that the Scriptures close, to those who die unrepentant, the hope of salvation, and that, according to our passage, the crucified and risen Lord carried personally a gracious message to, at least, some disobedient victims of the Flood. I shall give my views upon the passage, under the conviction that no candid discussion can be ultimately harmful. I take in order the several points.

"Being put to death in the flesh," *i. e.*, as a man; dying under the conditions of humanity; subject to its sufferings; to the violent severing of soul and body; his body being yielded to the tomb, and his spirit departing to the receptacle of the righteous dead in Hades.

"Made alive in the spirit." The word "spirit" answers to "flesh." He was so made alive that he was delivered from the bondage of the flesh, its sufferings and temptations raised, not as a mere spirit, but purged from all fleshly elements, etherialized, spiritualized, so that body and soul acted in harmony, as a predominantly spiritual nature.

"In which also he went and preached," *i. e.*, in which spiritualized condition, and thus, after his resurrection, and not before it. In the condition designated by πνεύματι he went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison. The

words "in which," imply that it was in his risen state; the "going" (πορευθείς) implies a personal going, and not acting through another. The verb and participle, ("going, he preached,") "he went and preached," might, through the elasticity of the Greek aorist, with no violence to the Greek idiom, be rendered "he had gone and preached," thus throwing back the preaching into a former time, as for example, into the time of Noah. But this is here forbidden by the context; as for instance the "in which" that naturally limits the time to that of the resurrection, and certainly by the "going"; which is of necessity understood of a personal going, and would be most unnatural if spoken of a preaching by Christ through Noah.[1]

With many able commentators (as Bengel, De Wette, Wiesinger, and Huther), I thus place the preaching after the resurrection; in that completed condition of soul and body in which the Lord had risen. Nor to those who hold that he went now on a mission of salvation, is the distinction unimportant. Such a mission, whatever its sphere, would be far more appropriate to his risen than to his unrisen state. Before the resurrection he was still the victim of death, and still in bondage to the tomb. He could not go into Hades to proclaim victory to others, so long as his own body was yet lying a prisoner of the grave. He was still in a state of humiliation; in fact, he was already in Hades, and thus the

[1] Eph. 2: 17. "And he came and preached to you," has been cited against this; but the "you" means here, the collective Gentiles in contrast with the Jews, and the reference is clearly to Christ's personal coming to earth as the publisher of a common peace. Equally irrelevant is the reference in support of such a use of "going" to Gen. 11: 7, where Jehovah says, "Let us go down and confound their language." The language here is simply anthropomorphic and figurative, and could no more be used in illustration of this passage than could his "riding on the wind," or, "going up with the sound of a trumpet."

captive of its monarch. True, he bore with him, as a spiritual trophy, to the underworld, the pardoned robber to whom he had said: "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." True, also, in the very moment of his death-struggle he released in anticipative victory, some of its victims. Yet he had not escaped the bitter and humiliating cup which he came to drink. He died as a man; as a man he yielded his body to the tomb; as a man—a human soul—he went into that region of Hades allotted to the righteous, viz., Paradise, the home of the happy dead, answering to the Elysium of the Greeks. Thither our Lord would naturally go, and thither the pardoned malefactor would naturally accompany him, The robber's salvation was the effect of Christ's saving power; but, when saved, he and his redeeming Lord found the same temporary abode, where the Lord of course remained until his resurrection; his companion remained, as doubtless all others will, until his own and the general resurrection.

It is not strange that, by the mass of readers, the going of Christ's spirit at his death, into the realm of the happy dead, should be confounded with the celebrated "*descensus ad inferos*,"—the going among the imprisoned spirits,—of our epistle. The nearness, almost identity, of time, and a certain vague relationship of place, led naturally to the confusion. But a scholar, like Archdeacon Farrar, has no excuse for affirming that "the only passage which proves the 'descent into hell' of the 'Apostle's Creed' is this passage of St. Peter." In reality the two have nothing to do with each other, and the imagery of Acts 2: 27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades," (wilt not abandon me to the grave,) is doubtless the parent of that familiar conception. Certainly

Christ's accompanying the saved thief to Paradise stands in no relation to any mission to the disobedient dead.[1]

And in his intermediate state he was in no formal position to convey any message of saving mercy. He was not yet, so to speak, saved himself. Only after his resurrection could he go with the tokens of his victory—his emancipated body, and his perfectly spiritualized nature—into any quarter of the realm of God.

But now what was his message, and whither did he bear it? He went and preached to the "spirits in prison." The "preaching" is supposed by a few commentators, who recognize the difficulty of making the preaching any other than that of the personal Christ, to be an announcement of judgment and condemnation. But such an errand is scarcely conceivable in this glad morning of the completed redemption; the general usage of the New Testament leads, if not requires us, with nearly all scholars, to understand the word of a gracious declaration; and this view is confirmed by the language in the following chapter: "For this cause the gospel was preached (the glad tidings were announced) to the dead," a passage which seems to have the same reference with that which we are considering.

[1] If from Paradise the soul of Jesus went to the realm of woe, it would seem much like Lazarus' going from the bosom of Abraham to minister to the tormented Dives. Lazarus was in Paradise; Dives was in Gehenna; both were in Hades. A little reflection would have spared a late writer the remark, about equally illogical and irreverent: "The Lord's declaration, 'To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise,' was not comforting, if Christ was going that day to the realm of lost spirits." Of course this passage asserts no such visit of Christ's disembodied spirit to Gehenna; such an interpretation is a mere *tour de force;* but if it had, the chasm which, under the local imagery of the Gospel (Luke 16) could be conversed across, however impassable to an ordinary earth-born foot, would have proved no obstacle to him who in death was still the Son of God; and irrespective of our little speculations, the dying robber, wherever his Lord led the way, would have felt and found it safe to follow him.

The persons preached to were the "spirits in prison," guilty spirits apparently, shut up for judgment or for trial. That it does not denote the entire body of lost spirits is shown by the subjoined participle, with its clause, which designates them as victims of the flood. The complex phrase naturally describes their condition at the time of the preaching, and thus along with the clause, "in which he went," etc., forbids our referring it to the time of Noah, when the persons preached to were neither "spirits," nor "in prison," but men and women living in the flesh. But may not the writer, we are asked, have referred to these persons in their later, and then present condition, to which their disobedience had consigned them? Nothing certainly in what precedes suggests such a strange mode of describing the listeners to Noah's preaching. Nothing, if Christ did not go and preach to them, comes out of it in what follows. Nothing indicates it in the language; no such form of expression as "the spirits now in prison," or, "those who had become spirits in prison"; nothing whatever declares or implies that the spirits in question do not appear in the form and locality in which the preaching was addressed. Nothing intimates that they are proleptically designated from the foreseen consequences of their disobedience.

We are told indeed that the writer, in the glow of composition, has caught the word "spirits," as a sort of echo from the "spirit" condition in which the Lord addressed them—"he went in spirit, and preached to the spirits," etc. This were conceivable, but the term would be simply a *figure*, and the language should be conformed to the thought,—he went in spirit and preached through Noah to the disobedient spirits of the flood. Or, if the term "spirits" called up their sub-

sequent doom and dwelling place, and led him, abandoning the figure, to speak of them as literal spirits, then again, as before, something in the language should explain it, and indicate their connection with the rebellious spirits of the flood. Some particle of time thrown in, should indicate the identity of the two classes. As it is, nothing appears thus far to connect them; nothing that shows why the apostle should say that Christ "went and preached to the spirits in prison," when or after "they disobeyed him in the days of Noah," instead of saying in a straightforward way, that he, in the days of Noah, preached through him to the people of the flood, and then referred, if he had occasion to, to the fate which their disobedience brought upon them, but which again would be somewhat singularly described by the term here employed. That fate was temporal destruction; it might well be supposed also, spiritual destruction. But the descriptive phrase which is entirely appropriate to designate a select class of persons to whom, as shut up to special judgment, the Lord had gone on a special mission, is singularly inappropriate as a description without anything further of the subjects of the preaching of the deluge. Even if made intelligible by some particle of time, it would still be unapparent why they should be precisely so designated. And as a simple, bald description of the subjects of Noah's preaching, it remains absolutely unaccountable; at once unnatural in thought, and preposterous in expression.

But does not the subjoined participle (with its adjunct *ποτέ, at one time*) come to the rescue of the partisans of the theory I am opposing, connecting the spirits with the time of Noah, and implying that they were the subjects of his preaching? This implication it undoubtedly makes. It

shows that these spirits—wheresoever Christ preached to them—were subjects in the flesh of the preaching of Noah. But while connecting the spirits with the time of Noah, does it also so connect the preaching with the preaching of Noah as to make the two identical? Here is a critical part of the argument, and much pains has been taken to show that we have here a predicate, and not an attributive participle, and that this decides the time of our Lord's preaching, to the time of Noah. The predicate character of the participle is unquestionable, but it makes for the other side of the question. I will state, as succinctly as I can, the differences of the two classes of participles, a difference familiar to Greek scholars.

The attributive participle (participle with article) defines and describes its substantive—(as, *τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀπειθήσασιν, the spirits that disobeyed*). The predicate, circumstantial (anarthrous participle, following a definite substantive), as already defined and known, adds to it, as already defined, a circumstance or quality (as *τοῖς πνεύμασιν ἀπειθήσασιν, the spirits on*, or *after*, or *although, disobeying*). So the present or continuous participle, as *ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ ποιῶν, the man who is* (or was) *doing; ὁ ἀνὴρ ποιῶν, the man while* (*or when*) *doing*. The predicate participle is often, though by no means always, accompanied in rendering by some limiting particle—the aorist, in accordance with its vague nature, more variously than the present, *with, when, by, on, after, although* (instrumental, concessive, causal, etc.). But in all cases, whether present or aorist, whether preceding or following the verb, the characteristic difference of the two classes remains. The one defines and describes, the other assumes and incidentally characterizes. The one is united by its article directly with the noun; the other is in some sort dissoci-

ated from its noun, and united more closely with the verb, giving some condition of, reason for, or perhaps result of, its action.

We have now in regard to the present passage, two hypotheses. In the one, Christ and Noah are one conjoint preacher, centuries anterior to the time of the writer, to which latter time belongs that of the "spirits in prison." In the other, Christ and the "spirits in prison" belong both to the same recent time. There are however, two separate preachings, one that of Christ, expressly declared; the other that of Noah, implied with attending disobedience.

In the former hypothesis, as no particle of time or form of expression has identified these spirits with the people of the flood, they would naturally be brought into relation to them by an attributive participle (the spirits in prison who were disobedient, etc.). Still, while such a participle would connect the two classes, it would not necessarily connect the two preachings. It would allow them as imprisoned spirits to receive the preaching of Christ; while yet, as unimprisoned spirits, they had in the flesh received and rejected the preaching of Noah. Neither, therefore, of the two attributive participles—either the present (*who were disobeying*), or the aorist (*who had disobeyed*), would serve the purpose of the first hypothesis. Either would be quite compatible with the second.

The predicate participle, we remember, dissociates itself from the noun, and connects itself with the verb. The predicate then connects the disobedience directly with the preaching. It reminds us, certainly, that the spirits here preached to had been disobedient in the days of Noah, and it may tell us that they were preached to while they were disobeying in

the days of Noah. In other words, the predicate participle may make not only the subjects of the preaching or preachings, but the preaching and the preachers identical. The preaching of Christ might have been through Noah. But for this it would matter what predicate participle is used, the present or the aorist.

The present would be: "he preached to them while they were disobeying," etc. The aorist: "he preached to them on their disobeying," or "when, after, although, they had disobeyed." The former unites the preachers, and brings the disobeying side by side with the preaching. The other, in its usual and natural construction, would bring the disobedience into relation to the preaching indeed, but not a relation of simultaneous time; it would throw back the disobedience to a former time, and to an implied former preaching, of which it had been the attendant.

Now of these two predicate participles, the one (the present) which would favor and perhaps necessitate the first hypothesis—that of the Christo-Noachian preaching—is precisely that which is not used. The one, on the contrary, which does not necessitate it; which does not even favor it; which only doubtfully allows it; which nearly necessitates the second, is that which is used. "He preached to them *while they were disobeying*," ἀπειθοῦσιν, would require the first. *He preached to them when, after, although, they had disobeyed;* ἀπειθήσασιν, requires the second. There is only one way of rendering the aorist, viz. (when *they disobeyed;* or, participially, *disobeying once*), which is possibly compatible with the first, and this is so harsh as to be nearly impossible. It takes the "when" which so often introduces the aorist in translation, as ὅτε, a particle of simultaneous time for which the aorist is

hardly ever used. The "when" with which our English version often introduces it, and often unfortunately, scarcely ever expresses mere simultaneousness, and generally implies it as a precedent or condition of the following action in fact or conception. Of all the four participial constructions the writer has refrained from the only one which would have required the first hypothesis, and employed the particular one which speaks most strongly for the other, whose most natural renderings, *when*, *after*, *although*, they had disobeyed, almost necessitates the hypothesis we advocate. Let me recall the conditions: A divinely enjoined preaching by Noah (which we learn of elsewhere) long ages ago to the men of his time, to which in refusing to listen they had been overwhelmed by the flood; a like preaching now, by the risen and personal Christ, readdressed to those now imprisoned spirits, notwithstanding their old-time disobedience. All this is implied in our passage, and to it every word is adjusted. The particle, *ποτέ*, *aforetime*, attached to a disobeying that was simultaneous with the preaching, is meaningless; but, attached to a disobeying that was centuries anterior to this later preaching, is eminently natural. In the other case it should have been united with *τοῖς ἀπειθοῦσιν*. As it stands the parts fit exactly to our interpretation. The concessive aorist participle, throwing with its *ποτέ* the disobedience indefinitely back; but this indefiniteness again limited by the *ὅτε*, "when the long suffering of God was waiting," etc.

The attributive aorist, I have already remarked, would have been perfectly compatible with our view. Nothing would have prevented the author from saying: "who had disobeyed him, *τοῖς ἀπειθήσασιν*, in the days of Noah"; but it would have been simply compatible with it. The aorist predicate

converts a fact into a reason; the participle becomes logical instead of merely historical. It reminds us why the Lord might have been expected not to carry his merciful message to those spirits who had turned their backs on his earlier preaching through the lips of Noah.

It is in vain then that defenders of the hypothesis of Christ's Noachian preaching have resorted for proof to the use of the predicate participle. Both the fact and the general force of the distinction of the two participles is, I suppose, beyond doubt, though its importance in individual cases may be easily exaggerated. And we may easily see why De Wette, Alford, and Lange have, without doing violence to their argument—at least without lack of scholarly candor—disregarded here the predicative force of the participle. The attributive, had it been used, would have been perfectly proper, and made nothing against their and our construction. It would simply have failed to tell, as does the predicate, strongly in their favor. They simply relinquished, carelessly or otherwise, one of the strong points in the cause they advocated. But this failure does not make the case itself less strong. With their theory, predicate or attributive is equally possible, though not equally significant. With the other it is nearly incompatible.

On the whole what do we find to favor the hypothesis of the Noachian preaching as identical with that of our passage? What, rather, that does not tend strongly against it? Is it the ἔν ᾧ, *in which*, which if all else required it, we might concede to the preincarnate and Logos era, but which is most naturally determined by the preceding πνεύματι to the post-incarnate epoch? The πορευθείς, which points only to a personal, literal going? The "spirits in prison" to whom we

are told expressly that our Lord went and preached, and to whom Noah did not preach, except by a prolepsis which, unexplained, is of intolerable harshness? The aorist predicate participle, which should have been the present? The ποτέ which should have been joined with ἐκήρυξεν, or exchanged for τότε? The verb ἀπειθέω itself, which, instead of being confined to the antediluvian disobedience to Noah, should have given way to a word expressing that gigantic old-world corruption which provoked both the preaching of Noah and the deluge that followed it? I may add, the singularly indirect and awkward way in which the great "Preacher of Righteousness" is introduced, if he was the immediate preacher of Peter's present description, as he certainly was, in that which these spirits had formerly disobeyed? In fine, if the sentence was intended to express the preaching of Christ through Noah, I do not see how it could well have gone more completely awry. If it was intended to declare the personal preaching of Christ, renewed to spirits that had perished under an old-time disobedience to a preaching from the same ultimate source, and now renewed in spite of that disobedience, the writer has with great brevity, and with a skillful use of the delicacies of the Greek idiom, perfectly accomplished it. Grammatically everything is in its place. Our way is blocked, if at all, by the difficulties of the thought. These I have no wish to belittle. The apostle has left them in obscurity from which we might well wish the veil had been lifted. But, if the language has not its obvious import, he has given us a puzzle in construction to which the "things hard to be understood" of his beloved brother Paul do not furnish many parallels. Paul's constructions are sometimes tangled, but not often misleading.

And, waiving doctrinal difficulties, our interpretation certainly harmonizes with the apostle's line of argument. The duty of repaying evil with well-doing is forcibly illustrated by the Saviour's dying, the just for the unjust; and not less strikingly illustrated by his going immediately on leaving the tomb to which human wickedness had consigned him, and making a proclamation of mercy to those who had formerly, through a long period, disregarded a like message ultimately, though not immediately, from the same high source. His bearing, in his Logos state, with the antediluvians, has no such pertinency to the apostle's purpose, especially as the outcome of that forbearance was the destroying deluge. Here everything comes into line. The example is from the Christian's incarnate Lord; and the disobedience which feebly describes the rampant ungodliness that incurred and defied the preaching of Noah, is a term thoroughly appropriate in reference to the rejection of a former preaching here, under extraordinary circumstances, renewed.

I add that this hypothesis gives a satisfactory solution of the question why Peter made this reference to Noah and the flood. The reply commonly made is that it was done to introduce the ark as the symbol of baptism. But if Christ went and preached to the spirits who had disobeyed his preaching through Noah, and had perished in the flood, the difficulty is solved; the figure of the ark would naturally suggest itself.

But, granting that it is the risen and personal Christ who bears this saving message, what is its extent and limit? First, the inclusion suggests the exclusion. It excludes the general world of ungodly men who had died before or since the flood. It embraces exclusively those who had rejected the preaching

of Noah, and perished from that rejection. But does it include the entire body of these, or only a certain portion of them? What, in other words, is the extent of the term "spirits in prison"? To this question I do not know that a certain answer can be given. Perhaps we can make an approach to a solution.

The predicative addition to the term "spirits in prison" sets them apart, so to speak, as a body closed in by themselves; limited to the contemporaries of Noah, and perhaps to a special class of these contemporaries. Who constitute this class we may not unplausibly conjecture.

The deluge was an extraordinary judgment on mankind; typical of the final judgment, but with important differences. It was a general, but not a universal, judgment; collective, and not individually discriminating; fleshly, and not spiritual; temporal, and not necessarily eternal. It was not a decision, ultimate and irretrievable, on the destinies of the race. While the majority—no doubt the large majority—were deeply corrupt, a not insignificant minority, we may hope, had escaped the contagion of the general ungodliness. The salvation of the ark was a family salvation, not discriminative of individual character. If one or two of the eight saved ones were unworthy, multitudes, we may suppose, of those who perished, only shared the fate of their surroundings. Surely the principle of evil was not alone active in that awful physical and moral chaos. Many who disobeyed and took the consequences of their disobedience, yet did not go down as reprobates into Gehenna, but bore into some temporary prison-hold (φυλακήν) germs of goodness that were yet to receive the Redeemer's gracious visitation. They had disobeyed his preaching through Noah, in that long waiting-time of his mercy, but

had borne beneath the flood, and to their subterranean prison-house, elements of life that were yet to quicken beneath a mightier voice. With what effect it reached them,—whoever they were,—we are told with abundant explicitness in the following chapter: "For this cause the good news was published to the dead, that, though they had been judged according to men in the flesh, they might live according to God in the spirit"; *i. e.*, that, though overwhelmed with a temporal and earthly judgment (that of the deluge), they might be graciously granted a spiritual salvation.

I do not in this indulge in mere speculation. The language, in the first place, restricts the Lord's preaching to the victims of the flood; the imprisoned spirits that had disobeyed in the days of Noah. Secondly, it allows regarding these, either of two hypotheses. It may confine itself to a section of these victims, who were known to Peter and to his readers as "the spirits in prison," and who therefore did not need any further defining limitation, and who did not require, *e. g.*, the attributive particle (*who* had formerly disobeyed him), but were understood without further description, as a special class of the guilty and unfortunate contemporaries of Noah. It certainly cannot be improbable that multitudes of those contemporaries in whose ears the divine message sounded, received the heavenly seed in soil that was not wholly insensible to spiritual influence, and perished in the flood, disobedient indeed, but not reprobate. These may fairly be conceived as the "spirits in prison" to whom the Lord bore his gracious message; who, perishing under extraordinary circumstances, were transformed from prisoners of wrath, to prisoners of hope, and shut up, not to the judgment, but to the mercy to come. Is it impossible that by some special

arrangement, such a gala day as this was awaiting the time of the consummated redemption?

And if the term "disobedient" overpasses even these bounds, and reaches all the victims of the flood, shall our orthodoxy meet an insuperable stumbling block? Revert for a moment to the subjects, the author, and the occasion of the preaching. The deluge was an event so exceptional that God repented himself of it (humanly speaking), and hung his bow in the clouds in pledge that it should not be repeated. It stands the one sole type of the final judgment. The occasion was probably the most signal event in the history of the universe, the death and resurrection of the Son of God. Who can limit the form, or the sphere of action of the personal Jesus, just crucified for the sins of the world; just emerging from the dwelling place of the dead; just having broken the prison bars of Hades, and the tyranny of the grave? Is it incredible that he had some message of mercy for a peculiar age, which aftertimes were not to see repeated? Perhaps before he "ascended high above all heavens" he "descended" on some mighty mission, "into the lower parts of the earth," and if he did not visit all the reprobates of Gehenna, carried at least the "glad tidings" into some place of temporary durance, and realized the promised "opening of the prison house, to them that were bound," in a much wider sense than we are wont to assign to it.

On this point, indeed, I think there is no perhaps. But we may not, as interpreters, either deny or transcend the declaration of the text. Where it leads we reverently follow; where it pauses we acquiescently pause. The passage we are considering tells us nothing of the general destinies of the antediluvians, or postdiluvians. It fixes no certain limits to

the desolations of the dreadful catastrophe to which it is restricted. But, with respect to that catastrophe, it throws into the blackness of its darkness an unmistakably relieving ray. It assures us that not all earth's myriads, except *eight* persons, and not all earth's unbelieving myriads were swept into irretrievable destruction. And it may be that the scope of its mercy is larger than our narrow conceptions. The bow of temporal promise which Jehovah flung across the clouds that had gathered over the retreating deluge, has shone across the ages in undimmed brightness and benignity. It may be that as the judgment which it illumined was typical of that more awful and final judgment, the bow itself was to be a token of a richer and heavenlier mercy. And assuredly the mission of divine benevolence which the passage that we have now been considering records, was worthy in its amplitude and scope of the great Missionary who made it, and of that declaration of its purpose and results which is made in the passage that almost immediately follows, and which in my opinion, allows of but one interpretation: "For this purpose the glad tidings were published to the dead, in order that though they had been judged with a human and fleshly judgment, they might be saved with a divine and spiritual salvation."

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